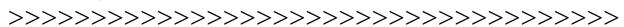
A Brief History of Squatting in Brighton



using space five

A Brief an	nd Incomplete	History of	of Squatting	in
Brighton ((and Hove)			

January 2012



Using Space 5

For more info on Using Space, check http://mujinga.net/squat.html
For the online version of this history, check http://network23.org/snob



Squatting in Brighton has a long and illustrious history, some of which is captured here. If you want to add or correct something, please send an email to the Squatters Network of Brighton (and Hove actually) on snobaha@gmail.com.

We are writing here the hidden history of squatting as a political tool but it is of course worth remembering that most squatting is completely secret and pretty much undocumented. People squat for a whole host of reasons including poverty, housing need and vulnerability. A recent Shelter report states that one in four single homeless people have squatted at some time. The politicised wing of squatting gets more media attention but it represents only one aspect of why people squat (although it also serves to fight for the rights of all). Certainly the political squatters are a radical minority.

Another point worth mentioning is that there is a long tradition of travellers squatting land in Brighton and living in vehicles. This loose grouping includes New Age Travellers, Irish travellers and gypsies. Increased parking restrictions in the centre (eg round the Lev**Using Space 5**

el) have pushed travellers towards the outside of town, but landsquats (sites) still occur down at the seafront, in Moulsecoomb Wild Park and other places.



Back in the day, presumably quite a bit of land was acquired by squatting it. In Hastings, a community of squatters laid claim to land created after a storm in 1287, at one point claiming to be the 24th state of the United States before being evicted. The land was called the <u>America Ground</u>.

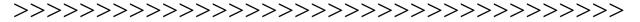
Closer to home, someone posts on <u>mybrightonandhove</u>:

My family owned and ran Hodshrove Farm, which was then sold to the council and became known as "The Bates Estate", which is now Moulsecoomb. My family moved down here in the early to mid 1800's from Derbyshire. It is thought that the head of the family, Joseph Bates, moved down here to take on an estate management job for a wealthy Brighton resident up by Preston Park. It is thought that maybe the circumstances changed and they pitched up on the land, where Moulsecoomb is today, and ringed a fence around it. Effectively squatting. However, the law at the time stated that however much land you can fence in one night was legally deemed as your own. Thus the birth of Hodshrove Farm and nurseries.



Harry Cowley and the Vigilantes took action to house ex-servicemen and their families. Following the world war, soldiers returned to poverty and people like Harry helped them to occupy empty properties quietly and without fuss. Harry Cowley was "the Guv'nor," who ruled the barrow boys working at the Level. You can read more about his interesting times in a Queenspark pamphlet. It is now out-of-print, but there should be copies locally in the library and the Cowley Club social centre on London Road (which of course takes its name from him.)

1940s



In recent times, squatting became an issue in the late 1940s, following Word War II. Servicemen once again returned to the UK with nothing and with nowhere to live, since their houses had been bombed out. Let down by the Government's empty promises amidst the chaos of postwar reconstruction, they took direct action and occupied various unused army bases and empty buildings. The Mass Observation Archive at the University of Sussex has some fascinating first hand reports. Down in Brighton, that colourful character Harry Cowley and his Vigilantes were again squatting empties for families.



1970s

After what appears to have been a lull, with records scarce, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the movement grew and became more political.

The issue again was housing. Steve Platt records in his chapter for the excellent book <u>'Squatting: The Real Story'</u> that in November 1971 the Cyrenians, a charity for the single homeless which had become exasperated with Brighton Council, squatted three houses". The Brighton Rents project was squatting buildings with widespread support (even Dennis Hobden, Labour MP for Kemptown, gave his backing). However, the Council refused to bow to community pressure and in July 1969, things came to a head. Houses in Queens Square and Wykeham Terrace were squatted. Platt records:

The army [ie Ministry of Defence], which owned the properties, had been intending to sell them with vacant possession, but the presence of squatters meant that this had to be postponed. The squatters dug in to fight and called for support. In the months up to the eviction (on 28 November) the local press pilloried the Rents Project and its helpers, warning of 'private armies' and 'terrible weapons' waiting at Wykeham Terrace. The dire warnings seemed to be validated when three people from the squat were arrested for firebombing a local army recruitment office. The petrol bombs had been made at the squat and several squatters were later sent to prison. These events were widely publicised with disastrous consequences. In Brighton for instance, squatting abruptly came to an end and the Brighton Rents Project disintegrated, torn apart by external hostility and internal divisions.

Over at <u>mybrightonandhove</u> someone claims that the bombs were planted by Special Branch. As ever, it is a mystery as to what really happened but we can certainly take this as an example of a time when the dominant discourse triumphed. Squatters were painted as the bad guys, using violence, even though the state always maintains the monopoly on violence, whether threatened or implemented. Certainly, in terms of the nascent squatting movement, the public had up to that point been quite sympathetic towards squatters who resisted eviction by any means necessary (for example in Redbridge and Fulham).

Two articles published in editions 18 and 19 of the Brighton Voice (a radical left wing newpaper published from 1973 to 1989) in 1974 spread a bit more light on the 1969 events. The anonymous author, who was clearly involved with the squatting actions, comments that the Brighton Rents Project was backed up the May Day Manifesto group of socialists, young socialists, international socialists, anarchists and communists. Students were involved.

The group campaigned on homelessness, surveying rented accommodation, keeping lists of empties and supporting rent registration by tenants. The Council appears to have dismissed the group and called the police when the project attempted to present a petition (eleven people were arrested). Beginning in May 1969 the group moved towards direct action, with two token occupations of houses which were later demolished. There were then two occupations in Terminus Road, two council-owned properties in Queen Square were squatted and the Drill Hall (stated to be now the Sussex Sports Centre) was cracked.



Then came Wykeham Terrace. It seems clear from this account that Steve Prior was an infiltrator who did indeed firebomb the Army Recruitment office only to smear the squat. It is also interesting to hear that the group eventually fell apart as a result of lack of support from the left generally and because of political factionalism between anarchists, socialists and communists.

In assessing the whole experience the author claims victory, contending that fifteen families were rehoused, the council was pressured into spending £700 renovating houses and the matter was kept in the public eye for month.

Regarding lessons learnt, these seem useful words:

On the press – "the degree of press hostility depends on a leader writer's stomach condition rather than logic, so don't bother about press publicity, get your own"

On the public -"a large section of the public will not be swayed by either logical argument or humanitarian appeal to support you. they believe that homelessness (and by extension joblessness) arises from people being feckless layabouts. show them any contrary evidence you like but they won't believe you. so don't waste your time trying to get them on your side: just be as truthful as possible as often as possible, but once you sense their belonging to this group, move on"

On the police – "police hostility is subtle, don't underestimate it; it's safer to be paranoic"

Seeing as the police harrassment extended to agent provocateurs, phone tapping, arrests and workplace visits, it seems good advice indeed.

The Brighton Voice also mentions these squats:

- 1. Mighell Street (April 1973)
- 2. Brighton Road Newhaven (1974)
- 3. South Avenue in Queens Park (Feb 1974)
- 4. Vere Road
- 5. 32 Buller Road
- 6. The Aquarius squat
- 7. 2 Temple Gardens (more about this one below)
- 8. 22 Montpelier Crescent (1975)
- 9. 29 poynter road (1976)
- 10.Buxton Road (1976)

Vere Road was violently evicted by <u>Nicholas van Hoogstraten</u>. The original Nasty Nick was an exceedingly unscrupulous landlord even by the standards set by other landlords (and we take a rather dim view of landlords in general). He was imprisoned for authorising a grenade attack on an associate and linked to the murder of Mohammed Raja in 1999 (but never convicted even though a civil court awared £6 million damages against him). He has a history of strong-arm tactics against squatters and tenants, pressuring people to leave with various underhand methods. Hoogstraten was later convicted over the Vere Road incident and fined £2,000 (Voice, issue 20).

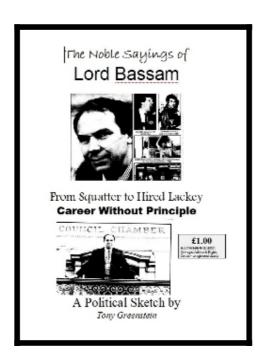
With issue 23, the Voice sees the chance to declare "the squatting movement has hit Brighton and this time it's here in a really big way". There were thought to be 80 squatters in town in April 1975 and at the Open Cafe (7 Victoria Road) there was a list of empties on the wall. The Brighton and Hove Squatters Association was set up with two objectives, namely to provide instant accommodation for homeless people in Brighton and to publicise the property/housing situation.



Three people involved in this went on to become well known figures in Brighton, all for rather different reasons:

<u>Tony Greenstein</u>, who is now secretary of Brighton & Hove TUC Unemployed Workers Centre, a member of the trade union Unison and also a founding member of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

Steve Bassam, who led Brighton and Hove Council from 1987 to 1999 and is now Lord Bassam of Brighton, a Labour peer! In the introduction to a pamphlet which he wrote on the sayings of 'Lord Brownnose', Greenstein observes that Bassam is "an example of the corruption at the heart of New Labour. It is a corruption that isn't merely financial, although there is plenty of that but a corruption of the political process itself, which hides behind the soundbite and verbal chaff". However, "those who live by spin and the soundbite will also die by them".



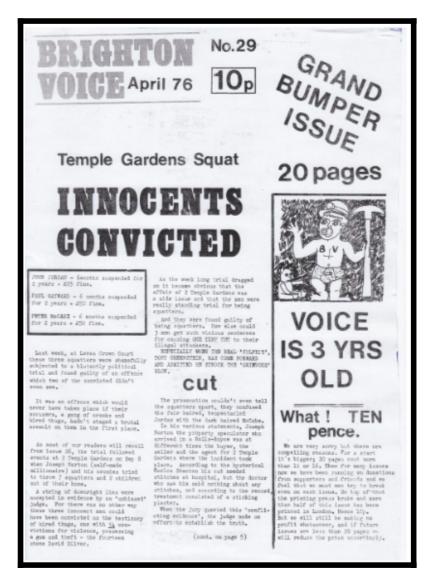
Also active in the Brighton Squatters Union was Bruno Crosby, called 'king of the squatters' by the Argus in his 2002 obituary. By all accounts a charmer, 'Big Bruno' even managed to get the Tory Council Leader round to his Argyle Road squat for tea. This house had been empty for five years and was completely renovated by Crosby. In one copy of the Voice there's a listing for the Brighton Squatters Union which says simply 'Find Bruno in the Norfolk most nights'.

However, things could change pretty fast. Perhaps the squatters were the victims of their own success sine the next mention of squatters in the Voice (issue 25) declares on the front page – 'Squatters under Attack':

All over Britain in the last month, the squatting movement has been under attack. Not from the armed bailiffs of five years ago but from the worthless articulate hacks of many newspapers. The Sunday People recently carried out a four week group-probe into the London Squatters, during which reporters infiltrated squats and then wrote stories portraying them as the next cell of the revolution.

In the July 15 Argus an article written by Gorringe entitled 'Throwing out squatters' advocated using thugs "indemnified against possible court action" and this might have had something to do

with the Argus applying to the County Court for a possession order on 20 Granville Road, which belonged to the Southern Publishing Company and had been empty since some Argus journalists lived there.



In issue 26 (Oct/Nov 1975) the front page screams 'Hired thugs in action again'. The squat at 2 Temple Gardens was attacked by heavies in one of SIX attempts to get them out before the court order was granted. A writer in the Voice opined "there is no issue about whether squatting is right or wrong. Homelessness is wrong and squatting is one way of doing something about it". Students were encouraged to squat to free up property for those in need and also to stop rent prices rocketing (since landlords were able to charge £30 a week for 6 students in a house).

The article finishes up:

Of course squatting is an attack on private property: it should be. Not an attack on the houses themselves or a destruction of walls, windows or floors, but a principled attack on the iron law of property which rules our society, making it lawful for some people to have two, three or twenty houses and others to have none at all. It may be the law but it is not justice. Squatting is one way of bringing a little bit of justice into this ruthless society. MORE PEOPLE SHOULD SQUAT.

On August 12 1975, a big debate on squatting (100 people) was organised by the Young Conservatives at the Marlborough and there were estimated to be 150 squats in Brighton.

In 1976, a motion by Brighton Council calling on the Government to criminalise squatting was passed by 39 to 12. The Campaign Against the Criminal Trespass Law fought an ultimately successful struggle to protect squatters rights.

And the Squatters Union had a first birthday party – on November 6 1976 at the Art College, on Grand Parade. Admission was 40p, or 30p for members 30p.

In June the following year, Brittania House on Queens Road was squatted as a 'Stuff the Jubilee' action (Voice, issue 38).

As an indication of the impact which squatters had on urban planning and local politics, we have a quote from a Voice interview with Michael Elbro, Brighton's new Housing Manager, who said in 1979:

I think that squatting is a symptom of the problem, it's not a problem in itself, it is only so because of the laws of our land. as squatting becomes more vociferous then we need to sit up and think that there's a lot wrong with the housing situation as it is. (issue 44 feb 1978).



Data for the 1980s is quite hard to come by, but it seems there was a squatscene which revolved around housing for activists and students.

In 1986, the Brighton Bomber said: There are many empty properties in Brighton which are being left to rot, most of which would make excellent squats. Why should we put up with living in expensive, tiny, often damp bedsits on our own, lining a landlord's pocket. [Issue 9]

Unfortunately the Voice does not have so much information as in the 1970s, although it does record in 1980 that the Sussex Housing Movement was set up out of the Squatters Union.

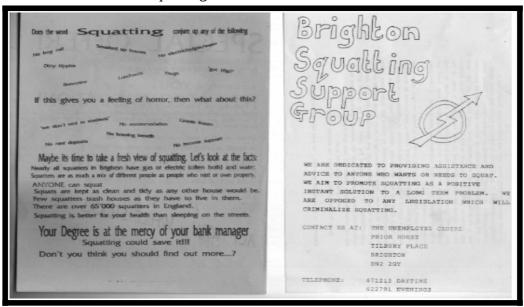
There was also the Portland Road story, where a squat was legalised but then evicted because of alleged theft of electricity.

Several housing co-operatives were set up out of squatted properties such as the Lorgan and Trumpton.

Two Piers, which the first co-op to have been set up in 1978, records in its <u>history</u>: "In 1982 squatters living at the Nook in Lovers Walk approached Two Piers to see if we could help them save the house and them from the Compulsory Purchase Order arising from the proposed railway development. We bought the house in 1984."



Throughout the 1990s, there were many squatted projects. This phenomenon can be seen against the backdrop of the increasing gentrification of Brighton. As many yuppies moved in who commuted to London for work, the centre became standardised, independent shops and traders got priced out and the mood switched. Residential squatting was forced out of the centre.



That bastion of truth <u>the Argus</u> recorded in 2007 that "The former Astoria Bingo Hall in Gloucester Place, the old court house and register office in Princes Street and the Madeira Café in Kemp Town were all wrecked as squatters descended on the city in the late Nineties".

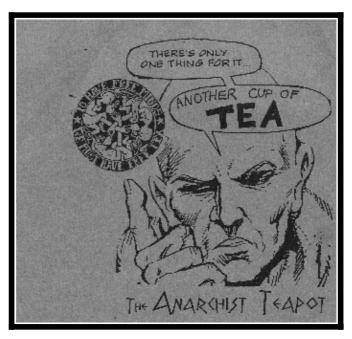
From 1993-5 some abandoned beach chalets were squatted near the West Pier. You can get a picture of just how much Brighton has changed when you go down the seafront and stop to observe that now these chalets are all now occupied by nightclubs, artists shops and tourist emporia.

Amusingly, when the squatters were evicted in 1996, half of them moved on to the abandoned West Pier, a wreck which could only be reached over water. You can find two local news clips on youtube (below) called 'West Pier Squatters' (with Bassam popping up but scrupulously ignoring his squatter past).

In 1994, the group Justice? was formed out of opposition to the <u>Criminal Justice Bill</u>, which amongst other things criminalised raves. The old court house was squatted. And <u>Schnews</u> was born.

In 1996, Justice? set up a Squatters Estate Agency to publicise the large amount of empty properties remaining in Brighton. You can also find a local news report about that on youtube...

Other groups active in Brighton were SPOR and Anarchist Teapot. Both deserve a mention.



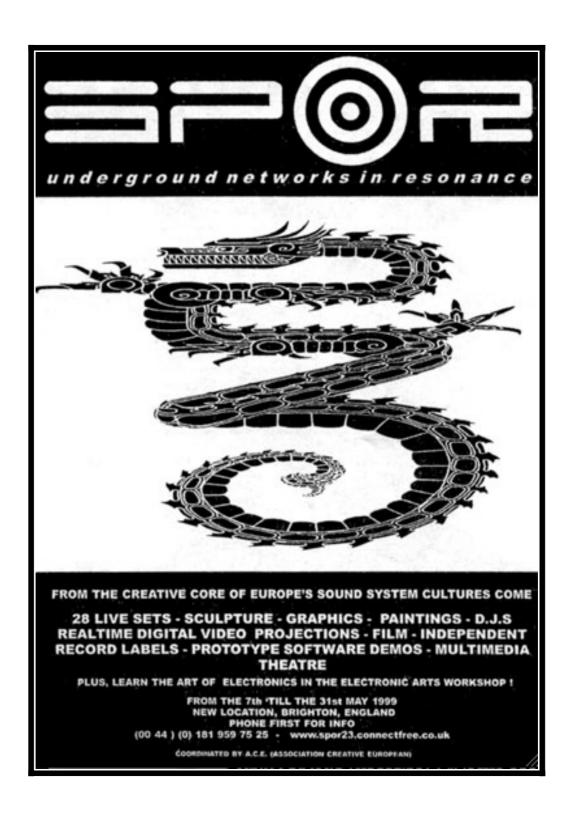
From 1996-9 the <u>Anarchist Teapot</u> collective squatted a variety of shops and organised vegan cafes in Brighton and Worthing in something like eight locations. There was always free tea apparently.

At one stage a Burger King was squatted on the London Road. The collective then shifted towards being a mobile soup kitchen, catering at activist events.

From 2000, a building on London Road was purchased which would later become the <u>Cowley Club</u>, a self-organised social centre. Around this time there was a huge debate over whether legal spaces where a good alternative to squatted projects. In this particular case, it seems the move to a space which plays the legal game yet remains oppositional was extremely wise since public squats tend to last a few months at most in Brighton and the Cowley has been open now for eight years.

SPOR were a loose grouping of artists and musicians who put on a couple of high profile art events. In 1999, they opened up some buildings at York Place, near to St Peters church, for a month long art exhibition which culminated in a party. In Jan/Feb 2001, SPOR took the disused Co-operative Bank, on Ship Street. The place was worked on intensively and then opened up as a family-friendly

art space. A film called <u>Rhizomatic#1</u> documents some of the philosophy behind the project. When the time came to evict, confused bailiffs met sock puppets talking to them through the letterbox and then <u>broke in to find an empty building</u>. The squatters had barricaded the building and then escaped from the roof.



CLOSING DOORS ON THE HOMELESS

In October the Government announced plans to criminalize squetting. The proposals, which could mean up to 6 months in prison or a £5,000 fine will have serious reparoussions on the homeless.



There are an estimated 600,000 empty properties in this country, while there are nearly 1 million families and individuals without a home. Squatting therefore is a valuable and effective way of solving housing problems.

To make squatting illegal means:

- emore pressure on local councils, who already have long waiting lists for houses
- instant criminalization of the 65,000 people (including many families) who squat
- a burden on local people who will foot the bill for the extra police and court time used in dealing with squats

It will also increase the likelihood of violence being used against those who continue to squat rather than be left homeless.

The proposals will be put to Parliament in March '92. They after no solutions to the problems faced by homeless people, but in fact make the situation worse.

WHY ARE HOUSES EMPTY WHEN PEOPLE ARE HOMELESS?

Squatting is a positive answer. Please take action to preserve the right to a home.

Information and support for anyone who is, or wants to squat, and information for anyone who wants to get involved is available from:

Squatting Support Group c/o Unemployed Centre, Prior House, Tilbury Place, Brighton BN2 2GY 27 671213 (daytime) or 622791 (eves)



2000s

As we move into the 2000s, we can see that squatting continues, following the same pattern of ebbs and flows. Sometimes up, sometimes down. Not so organised, no squatters unions, but still happening.

Medina House is a lovely old building on the seafront in Hove, next to the King Alfred's Leisure Centre. It was first squatted in 2002 and stayed squatted for years, despite occasional complaints about noise. The house was finally evicted in 2006. Only then to be resquatted and quickly evicted again! Now, Medina House stands empty and lonely, closed by a Fire Order after the Fire Brigade blocked up all the entrances, meaning it is a hazardous building which no-one is allowed to enter. The owner continues to press for planning permission for an obscene eight-storey block of flats.

To take some other events which happened through the 2000s, in 2003, there's a report of the Terra Audio social centre at the ex-Territorial Army barracks, on Lewes Road. According to Schnews, events were planned as follows:

Punk Bands on Friday night (13th) at 10.30pm; Sunday (15th) – Evian report back and footage, riot flicks and practical positive stuff, doors open 6pm.

Unfortunately the Space Invaders Festival <u>was busted</u>. The barracks are STILL standing empty today.

In 2006, Home Farmhouse in Stanmer Park was <u>squatted</u>. It was squatted again for a blissful few weeks in the <u>summer of 2010</u>.

Also in 2006, the Ray Tindle Centre on Upper Gardner Street was squatted as a social centre. The full tale of despicable speculation is told at <u>Rough Music</u>. There's also film on youtube...

Rough Music also covered in a few short articles the zero-tolerance policy on squatting. "Top cop" Nev Kemp stated in the Argus that "we won't tolerate squats in Brighton". RM responded:

Clued-up Rough Music readers will surely be aware that squatting is sensible and legal. Unfortunately, reliably thick and corrupt Sussex Police don't seem to be so clear about it, and treat squatting as one of those things that aren't quite actually illegal but should be – like protesting, cycling and tofu.

In April 2008, to tie in with the <u>days of action in support of squats and autonomous spaces across</u> Europe, a church was squatted on London Road. It lasted a few months and resisted eviction before being forcibly taken. It features in a film called <u>Takeover</u> and was briefly resquatted as a SmashEDO convergence space in 2009. The front of the church has now been converted into living space and the rest (ie the hall and a large back room) are presumably still standing empty.



The same year saw people squatting Fife House, an opulent property on Lewes Crescent, adjacent to Sussex Square. This got quite a lot of press and formed part of a whole string of stories (mainly London based) of so-called 'millionaire squats'. Interestingly, the media (until recently at least) have been quite sympathetic to these occupations, presumably since it involves the ultrarich being punished for leaving <u>expensive properties</u> empty (as second or even third or even tenth houses!).

And <u>Temporary Autonomous Art</u> took place in Brighton for the first time, in a squatted warehouse in Portslade, in 2008. TAAs (inspired by Hakim Bey's notion of the Temporary Autonomous Zone) have been taking place all over the country recently – in Manchester, London, Sheffield and Bristol. What began as a tactic to release creativity from the underground free party movement in London has evolved slowly into an art exhibition taking place in a squatted warehouse environment. Sadly this means that most of the interesting elements have been lost, since the events have retreated into

the industrial areas of towns rather than being in confrontational yet accessible venues, such as the early London TAAs in Farringdon, Hackney and Stoke Newington.

The 2009 version could have gone better, with a warehouse venue in <u>Moulsecoomb</u> bring squatted. This meant that the event catered to friends and friends of friends rather than the public. The 2010 version ended before it began, with the venue getting illegally evicted on the Thursday.

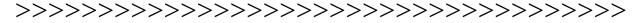
The <u>Freespace collective</u> occupied the former Gamer Heaven, a shop under a block of offices near to Preston Circus in 2009. They organised some cafes and gigs.



Recently there have been some positive stories for example the <u>Taj occupation</u> (below), the <u>Lewes Road Community Garden</u> (above, now sadly evicted, <u>Schmovies</u> made a great film about it), the InItOnIt parties and the School on Old Shoreham Road. The latter had widespread <u>local support</u> since residents are united in their outrage at developers leaving buildings to rot and fall down so they can then build new yuppy houses.



2010s



Taj was a Brighton institution, a fruit and veg shop with two branches, one on Old Steine, one on Western Road (with a 'secret' third one just round the corner from Western Road). Unfortunately, the parent company defaulted on a loan and as a result went into administration, with the result that the Old Steine branch was closed. This was a talking point in the local community which only become more outraged when it emerged that Sainsburys were planning to move in.

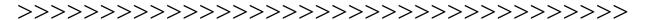
A <u>grassroots campaign</u> was set up opposing the Sainsburys plan in December and in February the former Taj building was squatted. This gave a huge boost to the campaign and people flooded in, with over 100 people at the initial planning meeting. Unfortunately the building was quickly evicted, but lots of new connections were made. Regrettably, the Sainsburys Local is now open but the campaign to keep supermarkets out of Brighton continues...

There has also been a <u>squatted school in Lewes</u> which originated as a south coast climate camp project plus a <u>social centre</u> on Churchill Square squatted in support of striking workers. A report on indymedia records:

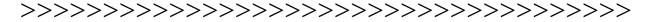
It sure was nice to parade through Churchill Square, the most ugly part of town, surrounded by a group of shouting toddlers and activist parents, to be met with an occupied anti-commercial space with banners screaming 'Strike Resist Occupy'. Sometimes even nowadays Brighton isn't so bad. I find marches difficult as I always end up feeling impotent and sad as all the good energy dissipates, but this time, I left the march and sat down with all the other old protest-heads in the centre and had a cuppa and a chat. It was a great end to the day (which in fact had only just begun).

And this is by no means the end, lately we've had a straight-edge social centre in a shop on North Road, the Ainsworth House Christmas eviction resistance and more active squats than in recent memory! More on that in revisions to come, no doubt....





Criminalisation



According to Councillor Maria Caulfield (Cabinet Member for Housing, Brighton and Hove City Councill), writing in the Argus:

Unfortunately, the romantic notion of the squatter who inhabits a property that would otherwise stand around empty, even makes improvements to the property and leaves for the next empty home without costing anyone anything, has long since disappeared.

In Caulfield's world, "squatters cost local taxpayers thousands of pounds" because of all the damage they do to Council properties. She seems to sidestep all too neatly the question of why these properties are empty and why the Council does not have plans for them. She even claims that having to repair buildings damaged by squatters leads to "unwelcome delays" for families who are desperate to move into these properties.

But then, you just have ask WHY there are more than 4,000 empty homes in Brighton and Hove.

Squatting can be seen anti-capitalist direct action and thus attracts a lot of repression. Squats are often illegally harassed by FIT [Forward Intelligence Team] units or even raided before demonstrations. This occurred in 2004 with the illegal eviction of a squat in the leadup to the Labour Party Conference. In another case, the night before a SmashEDO demo in 2010, a squat was raided on a flimsy pretext, leaving the front door completely destroyed.

'Mad Mike' Weatherley, the MP for Hove, has been a cheerleader for criminalisation. This is quite ironic seeing as Brighton and Hove police routinely evict squats illegally on flimsy grounds (such as suspected criminal damage or abstraction of electricity) which they think allows them to over-

ride the Section6 and kick the door in. Let's get this straight – the police regularly intimidate squatters with spurious charges (eg criminal damage for taking off a lock) which never end up in court. What a waste of taxpayers' money!

The flipside of the coin here is that cops have also got used to being able to blag or kick their way into buildings. If people were more on it and knew their rights the police would not be able to do this (or at least it would happen less). Brighton has changed a lot in the last 15 years. It's now a place where the centre is patrolled by private security (SASS), you have to pay for parking pretty much everywhere in the centre, traveller vehicles are hassled out of town and (most outrageous of all) the cops are planning to put a police station on the Level ('for the community'!?). A previous version said squats in the Laines might now be hard to pull off, but in fact there have been social centres at Churchill Square and North Road recently.

But nowadays it is hard to squat here, not impossible but difficult. Sussex Street, Shaftesbury Place, Rugby Place, Southdown Road, College Terrace, St.James Street, Argyll Road, York Place, Richmond Place and Albion Road have all seen squats which lasted at the most a few months, sometimes just days. There are other squats, better off anonymous, which have existed for years, but these are certainly the exceptions rather than the rule. However, things do seem to be on the up, as proven by the recent Taj occupation and the social centre projects. It was amazing that a building in central Brighton could be held until eviction through the court process without descending into a mess. The main reason for that was presumably the safer spaces policy which ensured that no-one in the building was using alcohol or other drugs.

In its brief lifetime the Sabotaj project attracted a lot of people and energy. Despite squatting being legal (for now!) and despite there being plenty of positive stories about squatting if you care to look for them, it seems that mainstream opinion is massively against squatting. This is in some degree shaped by (and indeed shapes) the appalling coverage given to the comparatively few instances of squatting horror stories. But you don't ban alcohol because some people occasionally get too drunk.

Whatever happens, squatting will continue.

Don't believe the hype...

Squat the world!

Email additions to snobaha@gmail.com

Sources

- - <u>56A</u>
 - The Brighton VoiceBrighton Argus

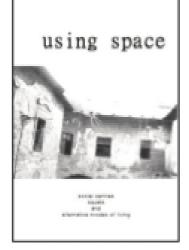
 - <u>Schnews</u>
 - <u>Indymedia</u>
 - <u>Squatworld</u>
 - Brighton Museum
 - Squatting the Real Story The rabble



BACK ISSUES OF USING SPACE

using space one introduces a zine about social centres, squats and alternative modes of living ... you get a long rant about various social centres i have visited or lived in around europe, as well as a profile of the poortgebouw in rotterdam, the netherlands.







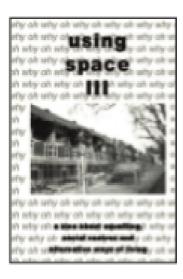


using space two focuses on a squatted street in rotterdam.

two long articles and some fotos from the nowevicted project are included, the second article is in dutch, the first in english.

- thoughts about the future of squatting
- report on the progress of the now defunct Maelstrom social centre in Leeds
- a personal history of the ELF squat in Amsterdam





USING SPACE FOUR





- visit to a squatted land project in central Amsterdam
- the UK national squat meet in Bristol
- rumination on social centres
- · large squatting action in Sweden
- fotoreport from the Dutch national squatting day
- recycled newspaper reports

