

TOTALLY INDYPENDENT

Newsletter of Haringey Solidarity Group

www.haringey.org.uk

GENTRIFICATION THREATENS THE WAREHOUSES

In the first weekend of August, the artists living in the Omega Works in Haringey Warehouses opened their homes to the public, to draw support and solidarity for their campaign to fight evictions there. The event welcomed the neighbourhood in the spirit of homemade 'do-it-yourself', in among a community of people who are being evicted to make space for a modern blocks of flats.



The developer's planning application claims to preserve the history and creativity of the artists living in the area. However, residents' opinion and feedback has been ignored. In a typical case of aggressive gentrification, the people whose needs are claimed to be served, are the ones being dispossessed, to attract a wealthier population that will change forever the character of the neighbourhood.

Omega works was a piano factory in the 1930s, where the largest piano in the world was created. Today, a thriving community is living and co-working together, sharing meals and building relationships in a big city that has become a place of isolation and hard living for most of us. But the current development proposals

would require the artists to rent accommodation and the much-needed workshops separately. As this will not be affordable anymore, they would have to change careers, or leave London or even the UK.

Looking at the big picture, the development plans published on Haringey Council's website reveal a 'masterplan' to knock through Crusader (a working industrial estate behind Omega) and through to the Arena Design Centre, a similar work / live warehouse of around 200 residents. Some

of them, and others warehouses in the immediate area, are already facing eviction for re-development purposes, just like in Omega. So if the development at Omega gets the go ahead, this major first step would ease similar destruction of large parts of the Haringey Warehouse district and its residents' lives in the near future.

But there is some hope: the artistic community will be submitting a competing planning application. Similar tactics have been applied in the recent past, with community-based development plans for the Wards Corner and the St Ann's Hospital in Tottenham. These efforts aim to set a precedent and create new paths of grassroots urban planning, driven this time by the local communities themselves.

To contact/support the campaign:
www.savethewarehouses.org

The developers plans are here:
https://publicregister.haringey.gov.uk/pr/s/planning-application/a0i8d000002GQziAAG/hgy20224310?c__r=Arcus_BE_Public_Register&tabset-3892f=3

PALESTINE: VIOLENCE BORN OF VIOLENCE

This is not the place for a detailed historical account of the conflict and suffering in historic Palestine. It's a simple and unequivocal message that HSG stands in solidarity with the Palestinian cause, and joins the hundreds of thousands attending weekly marches in Central London and millions around the world calling for an immediate ceasefire.

We reject liberal arguments that this conflict is a stalemate between two equal military powers. The killing of innocent civilians is wrong, be they the 10,000+ Palestinians bombed in Gaza, or the 1,000+ Israelis killed on October 7th. However, we also reject the moralising of the Israeli state, Zionist advocates, western media outlets and liberal capitalist politicians, that justifies support for genocide, ethnic-cleansing and collective punishment of Palestinians.

This is not a war that began on October 7th with Hamas' assault on the Israel Defense Forces and Israeli civilians. This is just the latest escalation in over a century of daily violence. HSG will never support attacks on civilians, and condemns atrocities of October 7th in moral terms without denying the political right of Palestinians to resist oppression. Because this oppression is the primary cause of suffering in the region.

As long as Israel exists as a settler-colonial state and Palestinians are violently displaced from their homes in the West Bank and blockaded in Gaza (the world's largest open air prison) and the region's non-Jewish population are subject to racist apartheid, we cannot be surprised or outraged that acts

of violence will be perpetrated against the oppressor. We aim not to downplay the fear and suffering of Israelis civilians traumatised and bereaved by the violence of Hamas, but to show that this isn't a moral problem - it's a political problem requiring political solutions.

**THERE'S NEVER
MONEY TO FEED
THE POOR
BUT ALWAYS PLENTY
TO FIGHT
A WAR**

These solutions cannot be reached without an immediate ceasefire and an end to the genocide. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, along with his allies Biden and Sunak reject calls for ceasefire until the 230 Israeli hostages are returned (ignoring the thousands of Palestinians kept hostage in Israeli cells without trial). But allegedly when Hamas offered to return these hostages in exchange for a ceasefire Israel refused, stating its objective was the total destruction of Hamas in the name of Israel's right to 'self-defence'.

Is the massacre of 4,000+ children in Gaza; the targeted bombing of densely populated residential neighbourhoods, of hospitals and ambulances, of refugee camps, of universities, of schools, of bakeries, of journalists; the denial of clean water and electricity; the internet

blackouts and obstructing access for international journalists without Israeli censorship; the prevention of aid; the displacement of hundreds of thousands; is any of this legitimate 'self-defence'? No. These are war crimes facilitated by racist dehumanising of Muslim and Arab populations, and the military, economic and diplomatic support given to Israel by states in the global north.

In the UK, our supposed political 'representatives' are complicit, and aim to silence dissenting opinions of those they 'represent'. At the time of publication, Labour MP for Tottenham David Lammy continues to voice his support for Israel's military activities despite the objections from many of his constituents in the form of numerous rallies, protests, letters, and challenges on his phone-in radio show.

Time is running out for those in Gaza. Contrary to the rhetoric of right-wing Israeli statesmen, cynical western politicians and their media allies, only an immediate ceasefire can end the current massacre.

There is little prospect of long term peace in sight. Many push for the international recognition of a Palestinian state - the 'two state solution'. We are afraid that as long as groups that demand the destruction of the other side exist, there will be no end to the bloodshed. The only real resolution is one that ensures all people's freedom and prosperity, based on collaboration, negotiations and mutual respect between the two communities directly. But for the time being this perspective seems to be no more than a dream.

PROFITING ON STARVATION

The media are claiming we now have a drop in food inflation. What the news headlines don't say is that lower food inflation is NOT cheaper food. Lower inflation really means that prices will continue to go up, but at a slower pace.

They also say supermarkets are cutting their prices on hundreds of items. A 10p discount means nothing after a raise in price of more than £1. And prices of many other items continue to go up, and up.

Some experts explain in the news that the war in Ukraine had affected supply chains, increasing prices. The experts have also spoken about droughts that affected food prices. However, this is a well-designed lie because supermarket chains are making record profits counted in billions of pounds.

They are making massive profits in 2022 and 2023 and having their best economics results for the last ten years. The increase in food price is mainly explained by this increase in profits.

Greedy supermarket owners and directors, like John Roberts (Sainsbury's) and Ken Murphy (Tesco), are pocketing a lot of money by emptying the fridges of the poorest Londoners, as well as many other citizens across the country. This evil business strategy is legal, while shop lifting basic food from supermarkets for our survival is a criminal offence.



This is how the actions of the government protects one of the worst strategies of rich people.

While these immoral activities are taking place, local heroes have started humble initiatives to improve the situation.

This is already making a difference for hundreds of families.

Food banks, food cooperatives, community cafes and other projects are happening all over Haringey.

If you need support, or you want to get involved, here is a list of some we know of:

Tottenham Food Bank (Call 0808 208 2138 or connectedcommunities@haringy.gov.uk) at Tottenham Town Hall, N15 4RY.

Holy Trinity Food Bank (info@holytrinityfoobank.org.uk) at Holy Trinity Church Hall, next to St Aidan's Primary School.

Antwerp Arms Community Pub (volunteer@antwerparms.co.uk) Antwerp Community Pub, N17 8AS.

Hornsey Food Bank (wearehorsey@gmail.com) at Middle Lane Methodist Church, N8 8NT.

OK Foundation

(www.okfoundation.org) at Lordship Hub N17 6NU on Thursdays, and Holcombe rd N17 9AA on Sundays.

To contact Cooperation Tottenham (food Co-op)

- Dave 07932 328 760

ABOLISH THE POLICE!

"The police do not prevent crime. This is one of the best kept secrets of modern life. Experts know it, the police know it, but the public does not know it." (David Bayley, academic expert on the police). All they do is react to crimes after the event, then often mess up the investigation, if they investigate at all. Setting up innocent people for crimes they haven't committed is not unheard of, and makes the police look like they are doing a good job.

We are led to believe the police serve and protect our communities. Really? The police were not created to protect society from a dangerous 'criminal' element, but as "a mechanism set up to protect the affluent from the dangerous classes" (Sir John Woodcock former chief constable and HM chief inspector of constabulary).



So, we are the targets of the police, we are the 'dangerous classes', and the idea is to keep us in line through fear and intimidation. This way society can be controlled and is not a threat to the rich and powerful who rule over us.

The police are aware that public opinion has shifted to one that is wary and not so trusting of them. Not surprising, when ethnic communities feel victimised by them, with

daily harassment especially of young black men.

When women like Sarah Everard are sexually abused, raped and murdered by serving police officers. Other corrupt officers are protected by their bosses to cover up their criminal activities. They don't want the public to know the truth.

So yes, abolish the police! We can start by rethinking how we deal with social issues. Funding

mental health care over criminalising people with poor mental health, social support rather than harassing the homeless, gainful employment rather than punishing poverty.

See:

www.abolitionistfutures.com/intro-to-abolition-2022
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Police_abolition_movement

WHAT CAN WE 'AFFORD'?

Everyone knows there's a housing crisis, cost-of-living crisis, public services crisis and climate crisis. But politicians claim we should be 'realistic' and that the Government can't 'afford' to deal with these crucial challenges.

This is cobblers. Society's resources have always been made available and mobilised whenever it suited the Government. Here's some examples:

During the second world war, the entire economy was transformed - industry was reorganised, rationing of all essentials ensured equality,

total recycling was introduced, and public transport expanded while private car use was cut by 95%. After the war, due to public pressure and despite the country supposedly being 'bankrupt', the NHS was created, the energy sector was nationalised, education was made free for all, and 1.5 million Council houses were built in the 1950s alone.

More recently, in 2007-9 over £130bn was spent bailing out the failing banking system. Then the Covid pandemic forced the Government to release an additional £400bn.

On top of all that, each year the Government is happy to shell out £24bn in Housing Benefit for landlords to subsidise extortionate rents, pay tens of £billions in credits to subsidise low wages and, waste £55bn on military funding.

The government also allows the fossil fuel industry to handout annual profits of over £60bn to shareholders, and allow the richest 171 individuals to amass an obscene, growing and barely-taxed wealth totaling £683bn.

All the country's resources are created by and belong to the people - they must be redirected to solving the crises we face and ensuring people's real needs are met. Money and Governments are the problem, not the solution, and should be abolished.

To do this people everywhere urgently need to build grassroots movements to work towards taking over their own neighbourhoods, workplaces, and the land - and to take over all decision-making for the good of humanity and the planet.

DECENT HOMES FOR ALL

We have written before about the work an organisation called St Ann's Redevelopment Trust (StART) did in trying to maximise the amount of social and affordable housing



on the St Ann's hospital site in Tottenham. Sadly, StART is no more, but at Haringey Solidarity Group (HSG) we want to make sure the developers and Haringey Council don't "forget" to build as much social and affordable housing as possible.

StART pushed for 100% council housing on the site. The GLA and Haringey Council both said no. But StART did get it agreed that Haringey Council can buy 18% of the homes as council housing. HSG are pushing that these homes are bought by the council. With 995 homes going on the site this could be an extra 179 council homes in the borough.

12% of the homes on the site are meant to be Shared Ownership. HSG, and many many others, don't accept shared ownership homes are genuinely affordable to most Haringey residents. We want the council to buy these as

well and turn them into council housing. We suspect the council won't want to do this - but we will push to make it happen.

56 homes are going to a housing co-op. Gida, a local black-led housing co-op are hoping to get these homes. It would then be the second biggest housing co-op in Haringey. Some 50+ houses on the site would then be owned and run collectively by local people.

With 3,000+ people on Haringey Council's waiting list, all new developments should be 100% council housing. At HSG we will help anyone campaigning for more social housing, or better housing for everyone.

Some groups fighting around housing issues:

**London Renters Union
(Haringey)**

[www.facebook.com/
HaringeyLRU](https://www.facebook.com/HaringeyLRU)

**Haringey Housing
Action Group**

haringeyhousingaction.org.uk
Haringey

Defend Council Housing
www.facebook.com/HDCHpage

BRINGING TOGETHER OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Haringey Community Action Network (HCAN) is a network of local groups who decided to bring together their respective struggles to enable closer working between the various organisations active in the borough. The network includes community groups covering a wide range of areas including housing, food, migrant support, fighting poverty, climate justice and others, along with Trade Unions and Haringey Trades Council.

HCAN was launched in September 2022 with a kick-off meeting held at North London Community House in Bruce Grove. 200 people attended and heard presentations from several trade unions and an introduction from each group affiliated with the network.

The next step was an event on 11th June at the Alevi Centre, Clarendon Road. Local groups presented their work and invited participants to bring their own ideas on the topics of Campaign Against Poverty, Climate Action, Housing, Migrant Justice, Public Services, and Trade Unions.

One of the issues discussed at the event was food poverty, and from this discussion Haringey Right to Food was born. In impressively quick time, the new group organised a Hunger March and Festival of Resistance on 23rd September. Several hundred local people joined a lively march from the Spurs ground, down the High Road, to Tottenham Green. The aims of the march were to protest against food poverty, to demand universal free school

meals for all Haringey school children and a community-led sustainable food strategy for Haringey.

The ability of the new Haringey Right to Food group to go from nothing to organising such a successful and well attended event in just a few months is a testament to the incredible hard work and commitment of those organising the march. It also shows the effectiveness of HCAN as a local network, bringing people and groups together, and helping promote and support such events across Haringey. HCAN is barely one year old but has already become an invaluable asset to the borough.

Contact details:
@HaringeyWeCan

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ECO-DEVASTATION



Rising temperatures causing extreme storms and floods are happening around the globe, including in the UK. Scientists warn of an ecological crisis that is a danger to all life on earth. Some of the figures are shocking: atmospheric CO₂ has doubled since the 1800's caused by the burning of fossil fuel and deforestation; the resulting greenhouse effect has increased average global temperatures by 1°C.

Governments are encouraging new green technologies to replace the existing dirty ones that heat our homes, transport us and produce our food and goods. But what about the accelerating human activity that has increased in the past few centuries? It has spread to every corner of the planet, resulting in the mass extinction of animal species by 68% since 1970. Vast areas of the planet are rapidly becoming deserts, and humans are

interfering with the planet with such intensity, that geologists talk about a new geological era, the Anthropocene. The word comes from the Greek word 'Anthropos' that means human.

Could we say that the reason behind this "planet crisis", is simply humans themselves as a species? Many indigenous people, when first meeting their Westerners conquerors, often claimed that the newcomers were mutants or sick, as opposed to themselves who were the genuine, healthy people. That our way of life, with the continuous extraction of resources to feed the non-stop 'development', can only happen at the expense of other living beings on the planet, as well as of humans themselves.

But could we then just put the blame on all 'western people'? We are being encouraged to consume responsibly, recycle, reduce our

'carbon footprint'. Yet, we are aware that big corporations, with the governments enabling them, are responsible for the bulk of the problem. There are vast profits to be made from large scale extraction of resources and industrial farming, from mass scale manufacturing of high tech consumer goods, just to name a few examples. And not to mention those close ties with weapon manufacturers and the power hungry war pigs of all kinds that constantly threaten us all with apocalyptic doomsday. The truth is that the transition to green technologies

seems to be just what is necessary to extend the lifetime of this system.

However, it is us, the working people, who are supporting the machine with our daily labour and consumption. It is on our shoulders that a small minority of the rich and powerful seem to be enjoying the good life in their ridiculously expensive manors. A small minority of oppressive individuals and their framework of institutions have the power to force the rest of us to participate in their death game.

Today, many communities around the world are revolting against this grim reality, struggling for survival against the forces of ecological devastation. Calls for solidarity, for the right to land and freedom, to life with love and harmony in our communities and with other living beings, are calls for survival and hope.

STATE TERROR FOR SALE

In mid-September, the not-so-great and not-so-good gathered at the ExCel centre for another edition of the Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEI) arms fair.

Representatives from around 100 national governments gathered to view the 1500+ arms manufacturers' exhibits in what organisers described as a 'record-breaking' year. On sale were the usual tanks, guns and bombs. Human rights groups have been banned from the event so there is no knowing if the previously uncovered illegal sales of cluster bombs and torture equipment continued.

Keeping up the UK's proud record of selling arms to the worst of the worst, the UK government went out of their way to invite most of the countries internationally recognised for their human rights abuses, including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain, Qatar, Thailand and Turkey.

The most disturbing continued presence of all was Israel, given the horrific amount of recent war crimes committed against Palestinians. Israel had their own exhibit alongside 40 of the country's arms manufacturers,

Unsurprisingly, the event has long attracted fierce criticism and protest. But, in the lull of our post-pandemic world and the Western arms sale propaganda surrounding the ongoing Ukraine war, these protests have sadly waned. Compared to previous editions of DSEI, direct actions from the anti-war movement were almost absent this year. Consequently, there was a media blackout and Sadiq Khan's criticisms of the event disappeared into thin air. Hopefully, though, outrage

over the Israel-Hamas war and other conflicts may spark our movement back into life before DSEI 2025, when we can fight to put an end to this outrageous event once and for all.



including Israel Aerospace Industries and Elbit Systems. The latter company, which runs factories in the UK, has been blacklisted by numerous countries for their illegal operations in the West Bank. But at DSEI they boast about these crimes of occupation by advertising their equipment as 'battle tested' (against innocent Palestinian civilians).

For more info:
stopthearmsfair.org.uk

WHO WE ARE

In 1991, Haringey Solidarity Group (HSG) emerged from the Anti-Poll Tax campaign. We wanted to create a long-term, vibrant, non-hierarchical group, unlike political parties where ambitions and posturing displace real politics.

We believe in ridding ourselves of the current system which places profit and power before people's needs. This involves getting organised, fighting back and collectively taking those decisions which affect our daily lives.

We think people should take control of their community and workplace struggles, support each other, encourage practical solidarity, build the necessary skills and knowledge for these struggles and generate strong, permanent, grassroots networks.

Many of us are involved with local residents', community and campaign groups within the borough. We support workers in dispute, campaigns against public service cuts and threatened community amenities. We are active on environmental, housing and claimants' issues and resist state controls.

Come and share your views at our monthly meeting. We welcome your involvement and with practical activities including distributing this newsletter and producing other materials including posters and leaflets.

**FIND OUT MORE
AND GET INVOLVED**

Visit haringey.org.uk
Befriend us on Facebook
Write to:
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