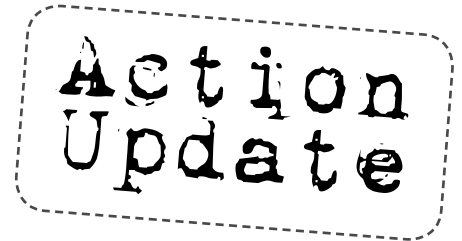


Earth First!



Summer 10

Resistance against sHell on Earth!

In April, activists blockaded the access to the Bacton gas terminal on the North Norfolk coast using steel arm tubes and a large tripod.

Bacton gas terminal is the largest of its kind in Britain, pumping North Sea gas to Britain and mainland Europe. The terminal is operated by Shell and the protesters took action in solidarity with the community in Rossport, Ireland, who are opposing the development of a similar facility by Shell.

A participant commented: "Bacton has been blockaded today in solidarity with the people of Mayo who have been protesting against Shell virtually daily since 2005. Residents there have been subjected to ongoing harassment from Shell and their contractors. Pat O'Donnell, a local fisherman, is currently serving a 7 month jail sentence for his part in the resistance to Shell's development".

Community resistance in the Rossport area has been fuelled by concerns that the new terminal will ruin the the coastal environment, farmland and wildlife habitats, as well as fishing grounds vital to the local economy. Locals complain they have suffered "ongoing and escalating physical and psychological harassment" from Shell, and refuse to engage with the company until Pat O'Donnell's release.



Join the struggle!

In the coming months there'll be plenty of action against Shell. They plan to do a huge amount of drilling (up to 80 bore holes) in beautiful Sruwaddacon estuary, which is part of both a Specially Protected Area (SPA) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under EU law – this is an incredible, unspoiled environment, which Shell aim to do serious damage to. They also plan to lay concrete mattresses on the pipe in Broadhaven Bay, an area which is supposedly similarly protected.

Local shell resisters say: "We don't aim to make it to easy for them. But we need your help – we need solidarity and support to stop the destruction!"

The annual June gathering, from 4th-7th June, is one of the biggest events of the year, and a great weekend to come, meet people, learn about the campaign, and see the beauty of Erris for yourself! But of course people are welcome to come and visit at all times.

shelltosea.com
rossportsolidaritycamp@gmail.com

Merthyr Coal Train Blockaded

On 26th April, Bristol and Bath Rising Tide stopped a coal train by blockading the rail track which carries coal from the controversial open-cast mine at Ffos-y-Fran in Merthyr Tydfil to Aberthaw Power Station. It took the combined efforts of British Rail Police and South Wales Police over 8 hours to remove the last of the protesters.

An artist's impression of the blockade (cameras were confiscated by police)



The activists reached the rail track at the mine at midday, and immediately phoned security to warn them about the protest. Three activists then used chains and padlocks to lock themselves to the train tracks. Two activists went to a nearby vantage point where they could warn any approaching trains. All of them were removed within four hours, but then a second wave of activists equipped with more heavy duty lock-on equipment attached themselves to the track, and took a further 4 hours to be removed.

18 people were arrested and held for over 24 hours, and one person's home was searched by 8 police officers for over 3 hours. They are due in court in May, charged under the Malicious Damages Act of 1861, a law to protect the interests of 19th Century rail owners with a maximum sentence of life in prison – although a lesser sentence is hoped for.

Leave our bog alone!

Peat Bog Extraction halted in Greater Manchester

On 14th April Earth First! activists shut down peat bog extraction at Chat Moss in Greater Manchester. They entered the site at 10.30 am and locked onto a lorry and the digger used to remove peat from the site. Two people managed to stay until the afternoon, preventing any peat being removed for several hours.

The Chat Moss site is the focus of a local campaign, and members of Save Our North West Greenbelt turned out to support the people locked on. They were turned away by the police before they even got in sight, but, undeterred, showed up at the police station when people were released.

Chat Moss is owned by Peel Holdings, who are not only deeply unpopular locally as a land owner, but also control four airports and the Trafford centre.

Peat – just don't buy it!

The destruction of peat bogs is not only a threat to local ecosystems but also massively contributes to climate change. Peat bogs act as huge 'carbon sponges': as peat is formed it locks away carbon that has been absorbed by plants as they grow, thereby helping to reduce the carbon in the atmosphere and slow global warming. The draining and extraction of this unique habitat causes the release of thousands of



Workers at Chatmoss get bogged down by protestors

years' worth of stored carbon. Globally, peat bogs cover just 3% of the world's surface but store twice as much carbon as all the world's forests combined.

The greatest threat to peat bogs is from peat extraction for use in horticulture. An area the size of 250 Trafalgar Squares is dug up every year for the UK's horticultural industry, with 70% of this demand coming from amateur gardeners. This is

despite the fact that peat free alternatives are available, and home made compost is a far better growing medium anyway.

You can download free copies of the newly published report: England's Peatlands – Carbon Storage & Greenhouse Gases from:

naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/NE257

Report Back - Earth First! Winter Moot

This year we had one of our biggest moots for some time with 85+ people coming to the Dipton Community Centre near Newcastle-upon-Tyne to discuss, analyse, plot and simply socialise.

Dipton is one of the new sites planned for open cast coal-mining, and it was where last year's bike Coal Caravan finished. People wanted to return to demonstrate continued solidarity with the local campaign against the open cast. More links were built with the community, who were supportive of our presence and appreciated the mass of us heading to the the social club for a visit. There were a couple of introductions from local campaigners, and on the Sunday a tour of the local site of the proposed mine.

This year we developed themes that had come out of the summer gathering. We discussed how the various crises – financial, peak oil, resource depletion and climate change – are going to intersect, how they are they are likely to impact on society and thus how we campaign. It was heavy going, and at times depressing, but worth doing.

In the evening there was a round-up from Mainhill Solidarity Camp, as well as a video of the final eviction.

Sunday focused on campaigns including a large coal meeting bringing together campaigners from across the country to continue resistance to open cast coal mining. I think those of us who put it on were very pleased at how well it had all gone, how much had come out of it and that we remain strong as a network. Much appreciation and thanks to the people of Newcastle who did so much of the stuff on the ground and sorted out the great food!

You can show solidarity with the local Dipton campaign by writing to the local Planning Team voicing your objection (include if you have been to visit the site, etc.).

Planning reference: CMA-1-77, Proposed surface mining of Billingside by UK Coal. Send letters to Mrs CL Teasdale, Planning Development Control Team, Regeneration and Economic Development, Durham County council, DH1 1JUQ

Is someone stealing our molecules?

Nanotechnology is a new science in which new materials and tiny structures are built atom-by-atom, or molecule-by-molecule, instead of the traditional methods of making parts from existing materials.

Nano means one-billionth, so a nanometre is one-billionth of a metre. Nanotech refers to things that are 100-150 nanometres or smaller. One nanometre is about 10 atoms wide. The letter "T" printed here is about one million nanometres – a lot smaller than most materials that occur naturally.

What makes scientists and industry salivate is that the properties of a material can be changed completely on the nano scale. Scientists can build new types of matter that do different things, even if they often look the same. This is being applied to many areas – from medicine to manufacturing to computing, and even to textiles and cosmetics. For example cheap carbon can be used to manufacture extremely strong materials to replace other more expensive raw materials.

And of course all this can be patented. A new gold rush is on to claim intellectual property rights over the 'invention' of nano-particles, and to rake in money every time the material is used. For example, just two companies, NEC and IMB own the 'rights' to carbon nano-tubes, and anyone wanting to use them has to pay a license fee.

But this is just the beginning. Nanotech engineers are working to create miniature factories using self-replicating nano-

machines to build complex products, eventually combining nanotech with GM technology to create synthetic forms of life.

The problem with nanotech

Even nanotech proponents predict that this revolution in manufacturing will cause widespread social upheaval as nanotech becomes more advanced.

More immediate are safety concerns – research has been sparse but results have been alarming. Nano-particles are so small that they can easily enter our blood and body cells. Because their properties are different, formerly safe materials may now be lethal to humans and the environment. For example it is suspected that carbon nano-tubes may have similar properties to asbestos. They are now found in many consumer items from tennis rackets to electronics

But this is about more than just a few extra safety regulations. It is a question of who will have future financial, intellectual and actual control of the molecular commons. Do we want to give companies the right to mess around with the building blocks of matter, and sell it back to us in a potentially dangerous form, via products that we don't actually need? Industrial mass production of molecular change is yet another risky strategy to accumulate profits that could have dramatic unforeseen consequences for our ecosystems, our health and our societies.

Nano-silver

Nano-silver is a highly reactive, powerful bactericide. It kills both the good and the bad bacteria in our ecosystems, water supply, and our bodies. Under most regulatory regimes, it qualifies as a pesticide, but it is being added to everyday products like soap and washing machines. For example:

- Aquafresh toothbrush by Glaxo Smith Klein (Superdrug)
- Nano-silver hair straighteners by Nicky Clarke (Argos)
- Silver-fresh socks Marks & Spencers)

The Stop Unsafe Nanosilver campaign demands immediate labelling and a moratorium until more research on safety has been carried out and legislation been put in place. They are holding a public meeting on 14th June, 7pm, Brixton Community Base, London SW2 1AS

corporatereview.org.uk, eco-action.org/nanotech, crnano.org

Nuclear

The planning process has now started for two nuclear new build sites: Wylfa in Anglesey, to be developed by Horizon (E.ON plus RWE) and Hinkley Point in Somerset, to be developed by EDF. Both companies hope to start work within two years.

However the battle is not lost – the nuclear programme remains vulnerable. A report published in 2009 by the government department for Business and Regulatory Reform (BERR) on the future of the nuclear industry suggests that new nuclear power in the UK could be threatened by any delays to the 'consultation' processes because it might cause investors to withdraw. In particular, it notes a lack of inspectors and engineers to

approve the new reactor designs, and a "skills gap" within the nuclear industry as a whole that needs to be filled before new build can start.

The community around Sizewell power station have been particularly active in drumming up resistance – they hosted a camp in April and blockaded the power station in February.

stopnuclearpower.blogspot.com





PROTEST CAMP SPECIAL

Fighting opencast – taking Sites of Special Social Interest

Using experience, tactics and lessons learned from the successes of the anti-roads movement, activists have occupied new opencast sites as a primary focus of campaigns against new coal.

But how transferable are these tactics learned in the 90's? With roads, there were over 500 new ones, with many different contractors taking many contracts. Contractors were put off because continuous occupations and actions made it too costly and because they had the choice to not take contracts. It was OK for the protest movement to lose most of the sites it occupied, as it was the sites that didn't need to be occupied that were the real victories.

In for the long haul

Occupations could be used to support community struggle and build momentum within existing campaigns. Sites could use the attention, both from the corporate media and the media we create, to get good information out there, whether in the form of independent research, publications, reports or zines.

Sites could also be focal points for a growing ecological direct action movement – and provide space to share skills whether in community engagement or using bolt cutters. They could give back space to surrounding communities that have had it taken from them, providing access to countryside and engaging with local kids.

And they could be climaxes of resistance, whether it's a Raeburn vehicle getting trashed in broad daylight outside Mainhill Solidarity Camp, or 70 people in rural Scotland resisting the onslaught of police and bailiffs.

'Sites could be seen as part of an overall campaign, that starts well before the occupation, and not as ends in themselves.'

The lessons learned in community engagement and solidarity at Mainhill could be built on, both in terms of what worked and what we didn't get right. Sites could be occupied three weeks or so before a mine application goes to planning hearing, with a clear plan mapped out for those three weeks for how the campaign is going to affect the planning hearing and win. We could engage in long-term community struggle in the areas affected by opencast-



Operators such as Scottish Coal and UK Coal can't stop digging up coal, it's what they do and it's a profitable business. How can we compete on a financial level when the revenue from Mainhill alone is likely to be around £70 million, and seven months of occupation and direct action probably cost the company 2 million at most?

With coal, there's no 'programme' to cancel, no government department to cave in. Expansion is driven by companies taking advantage of ease in planning and increased coal prices. In effect, we need to resist all the new sites, but there aren't enough for us to have the same effect as with the road protests.

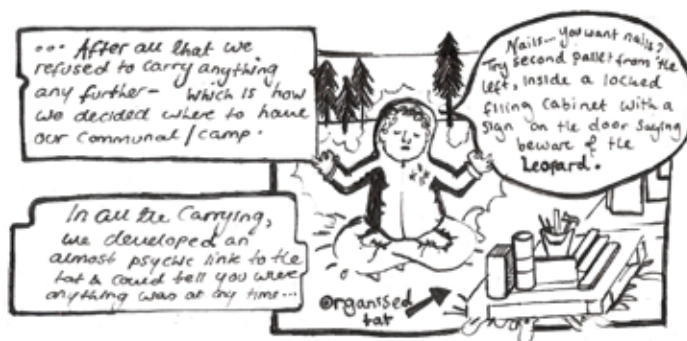
Maybe we need to see the aim of occupying a site as being slightly different to just costing the developer as much money as possible. If we are to be effective, we need to win the sites we occupy, and make change on a political and social level that prevents new opencast. So if direct action alone can't compete with the resources of an opencast company, what can?



ing. What about supporting worker's control in Douglas' remaining factory that would really help save jobs? Or helping communities develop small-scale renewable generation schemes and take back control over their natural resources?

Sites could be seen as part of an overall campaign, that starts well before the occupation, and not as ends in themselves. Otherwise there's a real danger of losing sites while not stopping many coal mines in the meantime.

coalaction.org.uk



Above is a page from a brand new zine about taking protest sites. To get your copy contact coalactionscotland@riseup.net



Huntingdon Lane camp resists opencast

On 12th March a new site sprung up near Telford, Shropshire, opposing one of UK Coal's latest mines. The 230 acre site eats into the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Beauty and the 900,000 tonnes of coal due to be excavated will have devastating effects on gorgeous ancient woodland. The mine will create three years of noise and dust for local residents and release over 2,430,000 tonnes of CO2.

The site is going strong and is yet to receive an eviction order. Most of the trees on site have been felled already but there is a lot of potential for tunnel digging with a low water table. There is a strong local campaign and most people living there are new to protest sites. They would welcome visitors, especially those with site or direct action experience, so get down there soon!

defendhuntingdonlane.wordpress.com

Scottish opencast battle continues

Blackwood Solidarity Camp

In March UK Coal started work on an opencast mine at Blair Farm in Fife. A small but determined group set up camp. UK Coal weren't happy – it took only 4 days for eviction papers to appear, setting a court date for 3 days later. The actual decision was postponed, but the arrival of the National Eviction Team for a preliminary investigation heralded a turn for the worse. The weather brought back memories of the frozen winter at Mainhill. With yet more snow, folk had to resort to scraping ice off wood to get at least some warmth. On top of this a lack of big trees and high water table meant the potential for strong defences didn't look great. While there was support from some locals, there weren't any real bonds and so not much help was received from there. With this numbers and morale fell and a hasty withdrawal was staged, just 10 days after set up.

Blackwood Solidarity Camp is best seen as a two week action to

show the coal industry it will be resisted wherever they show up. Add to that the costs of court hearings and getting the eviction team up from Wales, it was time well spent. The occupiers choice to not burn themselves out shows commitment to the long haul in fighting coal in Scotland. It also provided important solidarity with groups opposing UK Coal around the country and conveniently coincided with a recent report into UK Coal's activities, which can be read here:

www.mopg.co.uk/MOPG-Research-Reports.php

Mainhill sabotaged again

In April, three large mining machines were sabotaged at Mainhill opencast coal mine. In a communiqué the pixies said: "The only thing that has changed since the eviction of the camp is that the machines on the site are bigger and more expensive."

www.indymediascotland.org/node/18959

Camp Cuckoo

In Southend, Essex, 'Camp Cuckoo' sprang up in March to resist tree-felling in a public park as part of a road expansion scheme. This camp was re-occupying the land after the council reneged on promises it had made to the earlier Camp Bling. Shortly afterwards the camp was evicted, and private security company Chargecrest were brought in to keep locals away from tree-felling operations.

ppps.org.uk

Titnore Victory

The protest camp in Titnore Woods enjoyed an unexpected victory when the council voted unanimously against the 875-home housing scheme, which threatens one of the few remaining bits of ancient woodland along the south coast. While the developers are expected to appeal, this delay is a glorious reprieve.

The birth of Earth First! and road protests

Inspired by vibrant EF! groups elsewhere, the first clutch of radical eco-NVDA in Britain happened almost 20 years ago, in 1991. Actions were mainly targeted at road-building, wilderness destruction and logging imports coupled with the awareness that we were struggling against the underlying forces behind the trashing of the earth.

During 1991, Earth Firsters made links with residents opposing the M3 extension at Twyford Down. Activists and travellers set up camp on the Dongas, ancient trackways cut deep into the earth, home to rare Chalk Blue butterflies and orchids. EF! groups kept this first road protest camp stocked with people and tat, and organised actions to obstruct work – locking-on to cranes, night-time flooding of the site, and regular disruption of construction.

In those days before the internet EF! posted out info to every environmental, hunt sab, or peace group. This paid off in the massive resistance to the roads programme, which saw protest camps springing up around the country; weekly actions taken to road builders and politicians: their gardens dug up, their roof-tops squatted, their events disrupted; and a generation radicalised in

taking direct action and creating autonomous spaces. The 'biggest road building programme since the Romans' was slashed three times by a third, and countless places were saved from the onward march of car culture.

Come to the **EF! summer gathering (4th – 9th Aug)** to meet people, develop skills and hatch plans, and we'll see what the network can achieve as it goes into its third decade.

earthfirstgathering.org.uk

Outdoor skillshare, 19 - 21 June

Want to learn some of the skills helpful to living on and defending a site or got skills you want to share? Then look no further:

The Friday and Monday will focus on how to effectively share knowledge without creating hierarchies; Saturday and Sunday will have the tofu of the training. **outdoor-skillshare.noflag.org.uk**



Riot police arrest 23 in Zagreb

In February riot police arrested 23 activists from Green Action and Right to the City in Zagreb, Croatia. The raid removed an accommodation and information container. It took place after 4000 people protested against turning part of the pedestrian zone into a ramp for a car park attached to a shopping centre and luxury flats. zelena-akcija.hr

Vedanta mining protests continue

5,000 Dongria Kondhs people have protested against the controversial Vedanta alumina refinery and bauxite mine in India. The Dongria want the India Forest Rights Act of 2006, which gives forest-dwelling communities rights to land and other resources, to be implemented and also for the mining lease to be cancelled. earthfirst.org.uk/actionreports/node/23865

Sea Shepherd strikes again

Sea Shepherd has again succeeded in disrupting illegal

Japanese whaling in Antarctica. Exchanges of water cannon fire and rotten butter bomb attacks resulted in a significant cut in kill quotas which will negate profits. Meanwhile, Captain Peter Bethune of the *Ady Gil* is being detained in a maximum security cell awaiting trial on an array of trumped-up charges in Japan after he peacefully boarded a Japanese security ship and tried to arrest the skipper for the sinking of *Ady Gil* and attempted murder of the six crew. A bill for \$3 million dollars was presented for the replacement of the *Ady Gil*. Support Captain Bethune, now a political prisoner: seashepherd.org/matilda/support-captain...

Police clash with protesters in China land dispute

Authorities in the southwestern Chinese region of Guangxi sealed off a village and ordered a news blackout following violent clashes between local residents and police in a land dispute. Riot police fired tear gas and used electric shock batons on elderly protesters trying to prevent the takeover of their farmland for devel-

opment. earthfirst.org.uk/actionreports/node/23872

Mining firm occupied

Indigenous people in Bolivia have occupied the offices of a mining firm, with 700 Qulla People also blocking access to the railway line to the silver-zinc-lead mine owned by Japan's Sumitomo Corporation. With land being contaminated and water supplies threatened, compensation is demanded for the environmental damage. This action occurs at a time when President Evo Morales has refused the Qulla representation at the World People's Climate Conference. earthfirst.org.uk/actionreports/node/23876

Water blockade

Members of the Halalt First Nation in British Columbia maintained a two week road blockade in defence of the Chemainus River Aquifer which runs through their territory. The Halalt are dependent on supply and control of the river. earthfirst.org.uk/actionreports/node/23866

Australian coal port blockade

Hundreds of peaceful protesters occupied the harbour of the Newcastle coal port, Australia, in March and prevented coal ship movements. The coal corporations plan to expand exports to 300 million tonnes of coal per annum – a tripling of current capacity. Bushland will be razed, waterways polluted and communities ripped apart as the transnational coal companies carve their way westwards into Liverpool Plains. risingtide.org.au

Activists Against the Dam

In April, 850 protesters marched against the proposed Belo Monte mega-dam in the Brazilian Amazon. The dam would have devastating impacts including the flooding of large areas of land, reduction of fish stocks and encouragement of further mining development in the area. The dam will also bring many migrants, putting pressure on indigenous land and bringing diseases. Some activists have received death threats and have warned that they will commence a war if construction of the dam proceeds, with the River Xingu becoming 'a river of blood'. survivalinternational.org/news/5806

Whaling ship sabotaged

In early April Agenda 21 sabotaged a Norwegian whaling ship. Using the name of a 1992 United Nations Conference on the Environment, the group has promised Norway that if they did not comply with international conservation law, they would sink their whaling ships. This is the seventh Norwegian whaling vessel to come under attack since 1992. The head of a Norwegian whaling organisation complained "It is outrageous that this can be done year after year without anyone being caught."

Shoring up the blockade at Newcastle Coalport, Australia



EF! Contacts

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 c/o Unit 1356, PO Box
 7169, Poole BH15 9EL
 kernowaction.wordpress.com
 kernowaction@gmail.com

Networks

Coal Action Network
 coalaction.net

Genetic Engineering Network
 geneticsaction.org.uk
 (website out of date)

Network for Climate Action
 networkforclimateaction.org.uk

Plane Stupid
 planestupid.com

Rising Tide UK
 62 Fieldgate Street, London, E1 1ES
 risingtide.org.uk
 07708 794665

Saving Iceland
 savingiceland.org

Support

Activists Legal Project
 activistslegalproject.org.uk

Activist Mediation Network
 activistmediation.org.uk

Activist Security website
 activistsecurity.org

Advisory Service for Squatters
 020 3216 0099
 squatter.org.uk

Activist Tat Collective
 atcoop.org.uk

Activist Trauma Support
 activist-trauma.net 07962 406940

Earth Liberation Prisoners
 Prisoner support
 spiritoffreedom.org.uk

FreeBeagles
 Activist legal stuff
 freebeagles.org

Indymedia UK
 For (non-eco) news & views
 indymedia.org.uk

Schnews
 Free weekly news sheet and
 website. schnews.org.uk

Seeds for Change
 Action training. seedsforchange.org.uk

Tripod Training for creative social action
 tripodtraining.org

UK Action Medics
 actionmedics.org.uk

Protest Camps

Bilston Woods Anti-Bypass Camp
 c/o ACE, 17 West Montgomery
 Place, Edinburgh EH7 5HA
 0775 3280009
 bilstonglen-abs.org.uk
 Occupied since 2002 to
 block road building & a new
 biotech research facility.

Faslane Peace Camp
 Shandon, Nr Rhu, Helens-
 burgh, Scotland G84 8NT
 01436 820901
 Opposing nuclear weapons
 since 1982 at Faslane Naval
 Base, 30 miles from Glasgow.

Defend Huntingdon
 Lane Protest Camp
 defendhuntingdonlane@hushmail.com
 Site: contact 07727 295232
 defendhuntingdonlane.wordpress.com
 Protest camp resisting planned
 coal mine near Telford, Wrekin.

Titnore Emergency Action (TEA)
 Box 4144, Worthing, West Sussex
 07913 534083
 eco-action.org/porkbolter/
 camp-titnore....
 Camp opposing road building, a
 Tesco Hypermarket and a housing
 /commercial development

Global Contacts

See earthfirst.org.uk for EF!
 groups in North America, Mexico,
 Australia, Philippines, Nigeria,
 Slovakia, Czech Republic, Italy,
 Poland, Netherlands, & Belgium.

BlueNG Superglued

In mid April agrofuel company Blue NG had the doors to their head offices superglued shut in protest at their plans to build an agrofuel power plant in London. At the same time Bristol Council voted to reject plans for the Avonmouth Biofuels plant.

300 people getting in the way. In the meantime, three different Tesco stores in Bristol were attacked with bricks and spray paint: windows, doors and CCTV cameras were smashed and messages left: "It was fun. It was easy. It will be done again you pricks."

Tesco uprising

Tesco, notorious for pushing independent shops out of business and exploiting their suppliers, is being resisted in towns all over Britain.

In Titnore, the new Tesco had locks glued and 'Tesco sucks!' and 'Go away!' scrawled across windows. In Lewes, people grabbed empty shopping trolleys to form conga dancing chains around the store. tescopoly.org

When Tesco decided they needed a 32nd store in Bristol, local residents occupied the building and turned into a social centre. People managed to stay for over a month, and gave the eviction squad a run for their money with tripods and concrete lock ons and

Coal Action Network Relaunch

Nationally, the Coal Action Network has lain dormant. However from the first week of May there has been a relaunch with a brand new website with an interactive map showing all

planned coal developments in the UK. Not sure what to do with yourself this summer? Get up and get active against old king coal in your area! coalaction.org.uk

Golf resort trashed

Donald Trump's planned £1bn luxury golf resort in Aberdeenshire was hit in a £50,000 wrecking spree, which trashed newly planted grass and 500ft of fencing. A day

before, two JCB diggers were wrenched open and wires ripped out, batteries were removed and sand poured into the engines. 3,000 litres of diesel were contaminated with what is thought to be sugar. Weeks earlier six acres of dune land caught fire from an abandoned barbecue. It is not known if this was an accident. Mr Trump is embroiled in a furious row with residents, some of whom are threatened with eviction if their homes are compulsorily purchased.

Protesters form lengthy queues to gain entry to Bristol's 32nd Tesco store.



Two GM potato trials this year

The UK government have just approved a new GM potato trial to go ahead at the Leeds University farm near Tadcaster. It is also likely that they will approve a second, different potato trial by the Sainsbury Laboratory at the John Innes Centre, Norwich.

The Leeds potatoes are engineered to be resistant to nematodes. This is not a continuation of the potato

Tar sands protestors get dirty at the Tarmageddon protest in Oxford



trials which started in 2008, but the first year of a new trial that will continue until 2012. The Norwich trial would also run until 2012. It involves GM potatoes engineered to resist late potato blight. Both trials are experimental trials, and not part of an application to grow the potatoes on a commercial scale.

Despite growing evidence that GM does not increase yields, is extremely damaging to the environment and impoverishes farmers around the world, biotech corporations continue to push GM onto our plates. The latest con promoted by the GM spinners is that GM will provide the answer to climate change. Rather than cutting carbon emissions, stupid...

See gmfreeze.org for more info. Full details of the trials can be found on the defra.gov.uk website.

Tar sands actions

This spring has seen a rash of actions against BP and other

companies involved in the Tar Sands project, which involves extracting oil from vast areas of Canadian wilderness. This oil is not only impure and extremely polluting – emitting up to 5 times more greenhouse gas than standard oil – it is also causing high levels of cancer among the indigenous population of Tar Sands.

In February, an 'Oil-ympics' was held in London, to coincide with the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. The event involved three teams: BP, Shell and Royal Bank of Scotland, all ready to 'Race to the Tar Sands'. Meanwhile, activists in Bristol launched a night time attack on the RBS headquarters, breaking windows, smashing paint-bombs against upper floors and setting fire to tyres in the middle of the road.

In April, BP petrol stations in Plymouth, London and Brighton and were shut down by parties on the forecourt. Fossil Fools Day was celebrated with street theatre in Plymouth and Bristol, and 'out of order' signs posted on RBS cash machines in Brighton. stoptarsands.wordpress.com



back to black

Bristol Eco Village

In April, a bunch of Bristol people decided to live sustainably in a patch of urban wasteland with compost toilets, a veg garden and a massive clean-up of hazardous rubbish. They were evicted on 5th of May, despite support from local residents who managed to turn away a cherry picker, but were foiled by an aggressive digger driver. The bailiff company Constant and Co. evicted brutally – lowering tripods with people still sitting in them, causing one person serious leg injuries. formspring.me/BristolEcoV

About Earth First!

Earth First! is about direct action to halt the destruction of the Earth. We believe we can make a real difference by doing it ourselves rather than relying on leaders, governments or industry. We're a loose network of people, groups and campaigns coming together for ecological direct action and we believe in non-hierarchical organisation.

The name Earth First! is a banner for anyone who shares a similar philosophy to work under:

In the UK people have been taking direct action using the Earth First! name since the early 90s – stopping road building, the quarrying of coal, rock and peat, freeing our fields of geneti-

cally modified crops, protesting against climate criminals, fighting corporate power and much, much more.

If you believe action speaks louder than words, then Earth First! is for you.

The Earth First! Action Update

brings you a quarterly collection of news and updates on ecological direct action from the UK and beyond. You can pick up copies from your local social centre, or even better: subscribe and get it direct. The next issue will be out in August, so if you've got news to share send us your articles (150 words max.), actionupdate@earthfirst.org.uk, mail to the address below or post straight onto our [website: earthfirst.org.uk](http://earthfirst.org.uk)

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