Not Coal, Not Dole! Just Transition & Climate Jobs – protest against Cumbrian Coal Mine Sat 22 July

There is a "Speakers' Corner" public protest against the UK government's approval for a new coal mine in Cumbria on Saturday 22 July noon. Details are below.

ScotE3 ("Employment, Energy and Environment – Campaigning for climate jobs and a just transition) and Edinburgh Climate Coalition are mobilising from the Edinburgh area, so you can contact them for details of transport. The West of Scotland is nearer to Cumbria, for many it's nearer than Aberdeen, but the only possible transport is by car. We are not aware of any other transport but will publicise details if we get any. Let us know at info@ecosocialist.scot.

Our friends in Anti*Capitalist Resistance in England & Wales have an article by Cumbrian activist Allan Todd on their website

>> *here*

and you will be able to get Allan Todd's new book "Ecosocialism Not Extinction" from our Resistance Books bookstall at Climate Camp Scotland.

From the organisers of "Speakers Corner" Cumbria

Join us in Whitehaven on Saturday 22nd July, at 12 noon, to oppose the West Cumbria Coal Mine. We say: Not Coal, Not Dole! We want Climate Jobs and a Just Transition

We are inviting Trade Unions and supporters to join us for

the third Speakers' Corner event which will explore the themes of Climate Jobs and Just Transition. ***Bring your Trade Union banners!***

Is it possible to campaign against the proposed coal mine while supporting jobs for local people and boost Cumbria's economy? We believe it is. Thousands of jobs could be created in Cumbria in renewable energy, transport, housing retrofitting, and other sustainable activities. We can not have our communities left behind but coal jobs are not the jobs for the future or the present. Local communities shouldn't be held to ransom by West Cumbria Mining Ltd which is 82% owned by a Capital Investment company registered in Singapore!

Join us at the site to hear from great speakers talking about the prospect of Climate Jobs for Cumbria and a Just Transition for the area as an alternative to the coal mine.

*More**information by South Lakes Action on Climate Change** about the mine and why we oppose it.*

Speakers TBC. ***You can also share and invite friends on the Facebook event.***
Meeting point: *Outside the Marchon site, Whitehaven. On Wilson Pit Road, near junction with High Road. SatNav: 54°31'25.6"N 3°35'35.6"W. Click here for Google map pindrop. More information about parking will be shared closer to the date.*
Travel: Note that the RMT union has announced a train strike for 22nd July. *We are still going ahead with the event but you wont be able to travel by train. You will have to travel by vehicle to the event. We will try coordinate and support attendees with their travel arrangements.*
Direction: Arrive via the A595, as if heading for Whitehaven. Stay on that road until you see a road off [R., if travelling from the north; L., if travelling from the south], signed: 'St. Bees/Sandwith' – this is Mirehouse Road. Travel along this until you meet the B5345: turn L. onto St. Bees Road, and then, almost immediately, take the first R. on to Wilson

Pit Road. The coalmine site is on the L., next to West Coast Composting (Wilson Pit Yard).SatNav: CA28 9QJ. Note there are limited parking near the site.
***Accommodation**: You may also want to stay over if you are travelling for far afield so you may want to book campsite/accommodation early. So far we haven't made arrangements to support people with accommodation but we will explore accommodation with local people and other options.*
We are also hoping on the day to also carry out some outreach/door knocking activity in the local area and hold a social/film event tbc. More information soon.

From ScotE3

Solidarity with stop the Cumbrian Coal Mine Campaigners

- *Keep the carbon in the soil: Scientists across the globe are clear that if we are to prevent catastrophic global warming then we can't continue to develop new oil fields and dig new coal mines.*
- *Coal energy has the highest carbon footprint of all energy types.*

In December 2022 the Westminster government gave the green light for the development of a new coal mine at Whitehaven on the Cumbrian coast. The decision flies in the face of statements made by the Tories took while the UK hosted COP 26 in Glasgow. But post-COP and during an ongoing cost of living crisis their mantra has become 'energy security'. This apparently justifies opening a new licensing round for North Sea oil and gas, massive investment in nuclear and a U-turn on coal. As we write this it looks likely that the Tories will use their majority in the House of Commons to strike out a Lords amendment that would ban all new coal mining.

The new mine is intended to supply coal that can be processed into coke for use by the UK steel industry. Tory ministers argue that coke is essential for steel production and that domestic production will cut the carbon emissions resulting from the transportation necessary for imported coal. But the

focus of the two major UK steel producers is on decarbonising steel production by using green hydrogen, moreover the Cumbrian coal is unsuitable for steel production:

'The UK steel industry has been clear that the coal from the West Cumbria mine has limited potential due to its high sulphur levels," said Chris McDonald, chief executive of the Materials Processing Institute, which serves as the UK's national centre for steel research.'

So, in reality, the government's arguments are simply a poor attempt at greenwashing. It's estimated that if the project goes ahead around 83% of the 2.8 million tonnes of coal extracted each year will be exported. They talk about it being a Net Zero coalfield. It's the same sleight of hand as they use to argue that the North Sea will become a Net Zero oil and gas producing area. You electrify the industrial processed required for extraction, offset other emissions and don't count the carbon embedded in the coal (or oil) because that's the responsibility of the end user! All in all It looks like the government's coalition to go ahead is an entirely political strategy aimed at pushing back genuine action on climate in favour of the big corporate interests that dominate energy production.

Lord Deben, Tory chair of the UK Climate Change Committee stated in June 2022 that:

'As far as the coal mine in Cumbria is concerned, let's be absolutely clear, it is absolutely indefensible. First of all, 80% of what it produces will be exported, so it is not something largely for internal consumption. It is not going to contribute anything to our domestic needs in the terms we're talking about, the cost of energy and the rest.'

The other argument used by ministers, however, is one that we do need to take seriously. Whitehaven is a one-time coal and iron mining town and currently has high levels of

deprivation. Proponents of the mine say that it will guarantee 500 jobs for 50 years. Putting the investment required for the mine into almost any other form of local economic activity would produce more jobs and certainly investing in renewables in the Whitehaven area would provide, more and more long-term sustainable jobs. But while local people have no faith in their being such investment the pull of the mine remains attractive.

Two court cases aimed at stopping the mine are due to be heard near the end of October 2023. In the meantime, a coalition of national and local environmental organisations are organising resistance. On Saturday 22nd July there will be a day of action in Whitehaven with a rally, leafletting and door to door conversations with local people.

We want to coordinate solidarity contingents from Scotland. If you are able to join It would be very helpful if you could answer these three questions.

I am interested in joining the delegation to Whitehaven on 22nd July.
I could provide a car and take passengers.
If it's an option, I would prefer to stay overnight and return on Sunday 23rd.

Please reply to triple.e.scot@gmail.com (you can use the contact form on the ScotE3 if you wish) and cc edinburghclimatecoalition@gmail.com

https://scote3.net/2023/06/23/climate-jobs-not-coal-or-dole/

Aberdeen: Occupation of Edinburgh offices in support of Torry community

Activists occupy tree outside Edinburgh offices in support of Torry community in Aberdeen. Press statement from This is Rigged.

Ironside Farrar, Environmental Consultants with offices in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Manchester were commissioned by Energy Transition Zone Ltd (ETZ Ltd) to produce a 'Masterplan' for the industrial development of parts of St. Fittick's Park, Gregness and Doonies Farm in Aberdeen. They were also tasked with obtaining Planning Permission for this development. Ironside Farrar's plans were presented to the Aberdeen City Council Management Planning Committee yesterday morning (29th June). The Council say they will adopt the 'Masterplan' as Planning Guidance.

On the same day, supporters of This Is Rigged went to the Edinburgh offices of Ironside Farrar and met with Julian Farrar, Managing Director of the company, to discuss the issues and request that Ironside Farrar withdraw from further work for ETZ Ltd, and that employees boycott all further work for ETZ Ltd for the following reasons:

St Fittick's park is the last remaining green space in Torry, which is one of the country's most deprived communities, where residents have a life expectancy ten years lower than people living in wealthier parts of Aberdeen. Commenting on the potential loss of the park, local doctors and nurses fighting to improve the health of the Torry community, say that

industrialising any part of St. Fittick's Park will be devastating for the health of that community.

In addition to its positive contribution to human health, St. Fittick's Park is an oasis for wildlife, including many species of migrating birds, and Gregness and Doonies Farm support this wildlife as green corridors. In a recent article in the Guardian, journalist Tom wall suggested the park's wetland is "perhaps Aberdeen's most unlikely beauty spot. Reeds flap and bend in blasts of salt-edged wind. Grey and blue light catch in watery beds, where ducks dip and preen. Birds shelter in a young woodland of oak, dark green pine and silvery birch trees."

It therefore makes no sense to destroy this important habitat while Scotland is in the midst of a biodiversity crisis. Furthermore, the wetlands and forest created 10 years ago in St. Fittick's Park are already capturing carbon, and it is increasingly recognised that ecosystems like these even regulate local climate including rainfall.

The main purposes of the proposed Energy Transition Zone will be to develop carbon capture and hydrogen technologies, both of which are considered by leading scientists to be unproven and dangerous excuses for continued oil extraction and habitat destruction.

In yesterday's meeting, Julian Farrar was warned that being complicit in destroying the wetlands and woodland, both of which are vitally important green spaces and biodiversity sites that have taken years and a tens of thousands of community man-hours to create, would be seen as an act of immeasurable violence.

Ishbel Shand, member of the Friends of St.Fittick's Park campaign said,

"The proposed industrial development is simply a land grab by the oil and gas industry to fill the pockets of their

shareholders and directors.”

After leaving the meeting with Julian Farrar, This is Rigged activists Mike Downham and Tom Johnson decided to occupy a small tree outside the Ironside Farrar offices, and are there awaiting a response.

Mike Downham, a retired paediatrician and children’s DR said,

“There is a high incidence of asthma in children in Torry due to particulate matter air pollution from the nearby incinerator and the South Harbour industrial development. Further industrial development in this community would have a serious negative impact on the health of children in Torry.”

Following the meeting, Tom Johnson, a painter-decorator and This is rigged supporter who knows St. Fittick’s park well said,

“If Ironside Farrar were to pull out of the project at this stage, it would have a huge positive effect on the wellbeing and health of the Torry community – disempowered folk who have lost so much already. I mean, Imagine losing an entire bay – your access to the sea. And now forests they planted 10 years ago are to be ripped up and concreted over with “green” factories.”

“Julian Farrar explained to me that Ironside Farrar have reduced the amount of harm to be done in the park, but if they now come out against any destruction WHATSOEVER of these spaces, that will be a really bold statement of solidarity, and an action that shows their real concern for the environment, and people. We understand it’s difficult for a company to do something like that in current economic and political contexts, but to me Julian did seem to be uncomfortable with what’s going on with the ETZ.”

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