

1st April 2020

We are writing from the canopy. 20 metres up an old lime tree. 6 days into the attempted eviction of Crackley Wood. 1 week into the Covid lockdown.

Bats come out of hibernation today, and the hawkers have been sent in to get rid of the nesting birds. HS2 are preparing to cut down this ancient woodland without Notice to Proceed.

There are four of us in this tree, currently isolated from one or two more further down. The four of us being a father and scientist, a former Taekwondo national champion/World's OKest Bass Player, a rovin' philosophy dropout, and a squirrel-eating folk singer.

We have 5 demands.

Ultimately, we want to stop HS2. It does not serve ordinary people. It does not accommodate for a culture gearing towards a society with ecology on the agenda. HS2 is proclaimed to be carbon neutral in 120 years, yet during a time of biological annihilation and climate emergency, they consider wiping out precious woodland and endangered habitat a sound ecological plan.

The British public have not been informed of the costs or the implications of the project. Considering this is the most expensive railway per mile in the history of the world, at an estimated £307 million per mile, and being paid for by public money, this is completely undemocratic. We therefore seek a democratic solution.

We demand a citizen's assembly in the nature of the one used in Ireland for the repeal of the eighth amendment on abortion. This will ensure public money is used to meet public needs not private interests (at a time when the NHS has to decide who it can and cannot treat, leaving the more vulnerable facing death as a result of lack of staff and funds). This is our primary demand.

We also have demands that require immediate action.

- **Stop HS2 during this pandemic.** This is not essential work. HS2 should not be exempt from their current social responsibility. We have witnessed the impossibility of workers being able to keep to their social distancing.
- **Stop this eviction, and all others, during this pandemic.** We have witnessed the bailiffs be unwilling or unable to comply with the social distancing policy. Any kind of eviction brings high stress, which threatens the immune system. We are also at a height of 20 metres from the woodland floor, exposed to the elements with no free access to food or water. We are being given an ultimatum: either highly risk our personal immune systems, and therefore our close family and community's health, or hold onto our current home, which is part of the little remaining precious ecosystem we all rely on. This is completely unjust.
- **Stop any irreversible work** until both Chris Packham's court case on the legality of the project, and Notice to Proceed go ahead. That includes habitat destruction of any kind, work involving displacing homes, ground and preparatory works, etc.
- **Should work cease, we demand that workers receive adequate compensation**, the sum of which to be decided by the workers themselves, as only they know the needs for which this compensation need fill. The fallouts of poor decisions made by upper management and politicians should not fall upon those who are forced to implement them.

Signed,

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