

gangs to protect property is second nature to these scumbags.

To elaborate, we wish to re-iterate what the Gremlins expressed in their video communiqué last month:

"The State's 'solutions' to the problem of homelessness are degrading, dehumanising and nothing more than a quick fix. The process is riddled with long waiting lists, poor living standards and often only worsens people's well being. Countless buildings are left disused and unoccupied, whilst landlords and speculators profit at the expense of the people. The idea that it is a criminal offense to claim a roof over your head on a cold night is offensive and ridiculous."

Our initial aims were to reclaim this unoccupied space to re-open it for the use of the community, by opening a squatter's estate agents 'freelet', hosting regular café nights, films, talks, discussions, workshops, and much more. It's naturally disappointing papers have been served for a court date within a week, but also not unexpected. Instead we are using this opportunity to host a few events, express our solidarity with those we identify with and deserve our support, and to call for further resistance.

Strength and solidarity to anarchist prisoner Kostas Gournas, currently being tried for his participation in the armed group Revolutionary Struggle in Greece, and those accused in the same case. Our thoughts are also with Nikos Maziotis and Pola Roupa who remain at large – stay free comrades!

Solidarity and strength with all those fighting for their lives - from austerity riots in Europe, uprisings in the Middle East, insurrections in Latin America, to clashes everywhere in between.

To all the Bristol rebels plotting their next move, Brighton squatters fighting for homes, and London crew, whatever you're up to...let's go on the offensive already??

Links

Gremlins @ Gremlin Alley: www.welcometogremlinaleway.wordpress.com

Revolutionary Struggle case: www.revolutionarystrugglecase.noblogs.org



SQUATTERS TARGET ESTATE AGENTS KEYLET

Report from two days of resisting eviction:

On Tuesday 20th November we made our presence known to Keylet, owners of the Bute Dock Hotel and the largest estate agents (property racketeers) in Cardiff, that we had squatted their pub, on West Bute St.

Two people from our welcoming committee of a dozen visited the executive offices at around 10am, located behind our hotel, to inform them of our occupation. Due to the layout of the building(s), which includes an inter-connecting corridor between the offices and hotel, it was effectively explained to them, with title plans and legal notice included. **In summary which part of the building they still had possession of, and which part they had recently lost to us.**

At first they were offered coffee by staff and greeted with their well-known false politeness, but when Peter (Viddy) Vidler, executive director of Keylet and chairman of the Association of Letting and Management Agents turned up, he had an epic tantrum. After ripping up the documents delivered regarding the occupation, he demanded the squatters left within two hours "or else", and that the visitors left his office immediately, which they did, thanking staff for the delicious coffee.

Within half an hour, Viddy returned (still flustered) with a pack of meatheads from Specialist Security with intent to evict. As more arrived, a

first attempt was made to enter, but after opening a padlocked plywood door, they were greeted by deadbolts, a locked mortis and yale, two squatters on the roof and supportive neighbours hanging out of their window. Intimidated by a legal observer filming, a local thug from Specialist snatched the camera, instigating a bit of a scuffle. The camera was eventually retrieved by its owner, after intervention from the welcoming committee.

After failing to gain access they retreated with threats of 'Somali gangs' turning up to evict us, which never surfaced – on that day. Police then arrived, who generally were confused by the legal situation, which was explained to them, eventually receiving confirmation from their superiors that the squat was in fact legal.

Viddy & co then pleaded for their belongings, focussing on the wealth of chairs stored, so squatters began generously passing them down from a 1st floor window, in the unfortunate pouring rain. After the first chair hit the ground, they changed their mind, due to lack of transport and alternative storage. **They came for the pub - they left with a chair.**

Later the same evening we received a knock from a 'Jimmy Two Shoes', turned out to be Viddy with the West Bute St camera mugger. This time he pleaded for his belongings to be respected, during a rational discussion.

The next evening, a lone occupier awoke to the WBS camera mugger and someone with a metal pole coming up the stairs. After sufficient stalling collecting belongings, support turned up to find a served possession order (for a court date), cops, specialist security and individuals who identified as the Somali gang we were previously threatened with – employed via our friendly neighbours Keylet.

A distraction facilitated a squatter to climb up a drainpipe onto the roof, followed by another who let themselves in through a 1st floor window, upping the numbers inside to three. What followed was a negotiation with Viddy, where we threatened to prosecute (with sufficient evidence) over the unlawful break-in. He insisted it was 'a mistake', claiming he thought the hotel was no longer occupied. This resulted in him agreeing to leave, if we also did after court on Tuesday 27th November, calling off specialist security and the aforementioned gang.

Find out more about squatting in Cardiff: www.cardiff.squat.net

COMMUNIQUE FROM THE BUTE DOCK SQUATTERS

We take this opportunity to clarify our position regarding the occupation of the Bute Dock Hotel, which saw two days of successfully resisting eviction.

Our choice to squat the Bute Dock Hotel, which inter-connects with the largest estate agents in Cardiff, Keylet, was no coincidence – it was carefully chosen. After receiving advice regarding the unique nature of the legal situation, we carefully schemed a plan. This involved confronting Keylet with news of our occupation on the morning of Tuesday 20th November, with delegates from our welcoming committee.

Our intention was to disrupt their business, due to the inconvenience and embarrassment of having their executive offices connected to a squatted social project. To discover they had been storing their 'personal belongings' in the hotel was to us, an added bonus. They had a wealth of chairs, storage units, marketing literature, as well as a Christmas tree and popcorn makers we promptly made use of. We had unintentionally taken their tat hostage, and it felt empowering. While people are routinely evicted from their homes and experience difficulty in retrieving their belongings, to have the chairman of the Association of Letting and Management Agents pleading with us to respect and return his belongings was all too ironic.

To give context to who we are dealing with, the executive director of Keylet, Peter Vidler, is a director in twelve different letting and investment companies, including; Cardiff Bay Investment Ltd, Cardiff Property Lettings Ltd and Luxury Lets Ltd. In 2004, he was successfully prosecuted for trying to bully an employee into having an abortion, financially considering her pregnancy as a worst nightmare. She suffered verbal abuse and was repeatedly blamed for computer problems, causing her to contemplate 'ending it all', while Mr Vidler attempted to justify his actions publicly.

As a collective fighting against austerity, we feel it should be obvious as to why we targeted an estate agents. They are infamous for keeping buildings empty for their own financial gain, while people are living on the streets, unable to access secure housing. With ever increasing homelessness and the recent criminalisation of squatting residential properties, these property racketeers deserve more than ever to be held accountable, along with the state and their hired thugs. Furthermore, what followed after delivering the news of our occupation is a perfect example of the violence utilized to uphold and reinforce the value of property over people. Hiring heavies and