

## Saturday 10th April STREET PARTY !!!

The 121 Centre is throwing a magnificent Street Party this Saturday in central Brixton and you're invited.

Expect sounds systems, bands, performers, big scary puppets, free food, info tables, 50-foot 121'ers, genetically modified street dancers, havin' it party-people and no stinky cars. Get on down to the 121 Centre at 2pm sharp this Saturday for the meeting point. The party will begin shortly afterwards. We can't tell you the exact location in Brixton as it's a big secret but you'll be re-directed from The 121. Feel free to plug your own desires into the Street Party too - performers, strolling bards, Jokers, breakers, rappers, comedians & many, many more all greatly welcomed.

### PANIC IN THE STREETS



#### WHY A 121 STREET PARTY?

- Because we were sitting around wondering if we weren't being a big enough pain in the arse to the cops and The Council and we decided that *we weren't !!!*
  - Because it's Spring and time to throw off the shackles of winter introversion and kick in the warmer weather with a big chill-out on the old Frontline. Bring a beer, friend & movin' feet.
  - Because we don't need anyone to plan our fun for us. We can throw our own party and invite you all. It's your party too!
  - *'Because we want to!*
  - Because the council, the yuppie bar-owners, the developers and their like are constantly trying to take over more space - homes, centres, libraries, empty land, greenspaces - and push us out of it. We're gonna push back!
  - Because the 121 is still open 86 days after they could have evicted us & they haven't.
- ...And because, with the encroaching meaningless Yuppie leisure lifestyles that Council are bringing to Brixton, it's vital to do things for ourselves and to do them for free. That's what 121 has always been about. We're still here. Party On! See ya on The Frontline.

It seems that just like everything else with Lambeth Council, you can't even rely on them to evict an 18-year old squatted social centre. Defenders of the internationally infamous 121 Centre on Railton Rd have been operating the place behind barricades for a squat-tastic 86 days this Saturday waiting and a-waiting for the High Court bailiffs and riot cops surprise knock. They had even e-mailed Jim Dickson, Leader of the Council, reminding him that his 'asset' (i.e our building) was still awaiting the forces of the Evil Empire and that things are pretty much swinging down there. There was no reply from Slippery Jim. How utterly impolite of the bouncer!

#### PARTY ON: BE EXCELLENT TO EACH OTHER...

Snippets of recent life behind the big planks includes two wonderful solidarity cafes put on by the 56a Infoshop from the Elephant. Highlights included a set of great songs by Steve Cope (a long time 121 supporter and performer) and a blast of a

poetry reading by Steve Tasane. Foodwise, organic veggies have been finding themselves turned into a whole range of famous 121 dinners. Thanks to all those donating and re-cycling 'waste' food. Last weekend, there was a Cacophony Meal where members of the community thrashed outtop class free music. As ever a wide-range of ramshackle activities continues day by day inc. **free food every day at 9pm.** Oh! and the lovely decoration of the front of 121 continues with some big teeth and a some funk'n' slogans and cool-ass banners. Come on down and check the technique. Donations of paint, brushes and material very welcome. Passers-by have been adding in their best wishes and memories of the 121 building. As the banner says "Lambeth Council- keep your corrupt thieving hands off our building. The 121 belongs to the Community"

#### 121 Centre,

121 Railton Rd, Brixton, SE24

Phone 0171-274-6655

e-mail: mark261@hotmail.com

groovy website: 'http://i.am/121centre'

No. 11. 10th April 1999

**FREE**



**A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT TO 121**  
*'Don't be downhearted, keep going. As an ex-Londoner (and pensioner) with one foot in the grave, the other on a banana skin, I'm with you in spirit if not in body.'*  
 From M (by e-mail)

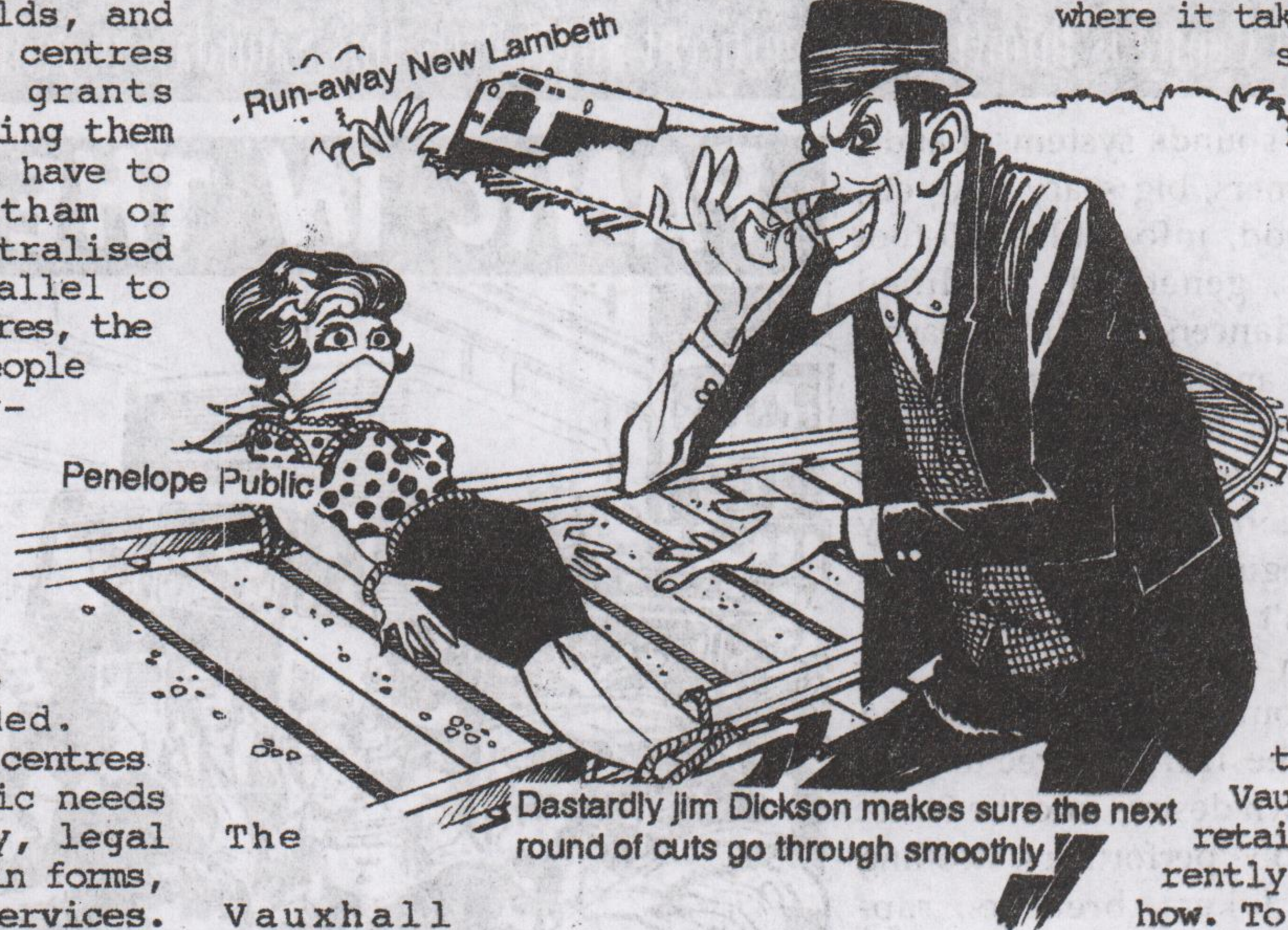


# LAMBETH ADVICE CENTRE MASSACRE

New Labour councillors have killed five local community advice centres. The Chinese, Vietnamese, Loughborough, Myatts Fields, and Vauxhall/Stockwell advice centres have had their council grants pulled, effectively shutting them down. Local residents will have to trek to Brixton, Streatham or Waterloo where larger centralised centres remain open. Parallel to the Library and school closures, the council wants to shuffle people into inaccessible overburdened centralised government institutions. New Labour aims for easy targets. The five closures represent some of Lambeth's poorest constituencies where services are badly needed. Among other things, advice centres sort out a variety of basic needs like benefits eligibility, legal difficulties, help filling in forms, and references for local services. They offer one-to-one aid and are a first point of contact for a lot of people mucking through bureaucratic and legal bullshit, especially important for people whose first language isn't English; people who haven't

applied/ don't even know they're eligible for benefits; & people in trouble, etc.

most vulnerable people who might find it either unnecessary or intimidating to go to larger more formal centres where it takes longer or is impossible to access the system. People that used these services don't necessarily need high level legal advice which is what the larger advice centers will focus on. As with the libraries, schools closures, the New Labour loonies are ignoring our needs while bulldozing through daft measures...



The Vauxhall advice centre, serving both Vauxhall and Stockwell areas, was actually very cost effective, operating through volunteers and a small council grant under £20,000. The advice centres served some of the

In effect these centres are closed but the Vauxhall centre wants to retain services and is currently trying to figure out how. To support them or find out more, contact:

**John McCay**  
**Vauxhall Advice Centre,**  
**157 S. Lambeth Rd. SW8**

# LATE DEVELOPERS

Remember the delayed planning application by CLS corporation to pave over Vauxhall Spring Gardens, the only open green space in Vauxhall, and build a £330 mill leisure complex? Why the wait? Well it turns out that a 15 story hotel and massive sports retail outlet just doesn't jive with the current Unitary Development Plan which sets the guidelines for parks and open space preservation and development.

"Over our dead bodies we touch our green spaces!" That's a quote from the council when the UDP was first written a few years back. But councillors change and so do priorities. Saving the only open green space in Vauxhall isn't one of them anymore. Currently the UDP guidelines are being reviewed and will be up for a brief review by the public, but as we've seen from the Libraries fiasco public review is sham.

Apparently the UDP is very difficult to get a hold of but if you do you will find that originally there was to be no build-

ing on public space. In 1995 the council recommendations for Spring Gardens was improve footpaths, lighting, boundaries and sports areas. In fact the council has neglected to start or complete most of the original recommendations and has let the space fall into considerable disrepair.

So why is this proposal for a mammoth concrete leisure retail complex with underground parking for a thousand cars - and pollution for all - even being considered by the council? Why is CLS waiting to

submit their proposal to the council and public for review? The UDP is up for review and perhaps the current council seeks a total reversal of the original. If CLS waits and the

new UDP allows for development then they might have a hell of an easier time getting permission...

## Time to stop this Rot!

Leigham Court Estate, recently cleared of most of its squatters at the sweaty hands of Lambeth Council and its goons (*Bailiff no.6 we know where you live*), is still empty and likely to stay that way. The council have been using their second favourite method of housing regeneration by giving them to Dastardly Dickson's drinking friends at Swale Housing Association, who despite being based in Sittingbourne Kent, already have their finger in Lambeth's pie by mismanaging the rest of Streatham's social housing, with some to be sold off and some repaired after years of neglect from Lambeth's toy-town housing department. (The Council's favourite method involves the indiscriminate selling-off of their huge stock of dilapidated houses)

Tenants on the estate are kicking up an ill-informed strop about the number of boarded-up houses on the estate especially in the past months and are worried about the houses being squatted. They've called on the Council to house homeless people in the empties. Here at the 'Stress', we don't like to burst the comfortable bubble of isolation that most people on the estate seem to live in but until a month ago the now empty houses were being lived in by young homeless people and families; *squatters to me and you let down by Lambeth's corrupt and unfair housing system*.

Some squats still survive on the Leigham Court Estate lost in the Councils housing mess or resquatted after their pointless eviction; last week the neighbour of one squatted house attacked a squatter with a machete in front of cops and Council goons slicing someones fingers, so much for homeless concern.

Despite the evil empires attempt to to make these houses even more unlivable we urge people to **resquat these houses in Amesbury Avenue, Hillside Rd, Barcombe Ave, Mount Nod Rd and Lydhurst Ave SW2.** (a list of the empties is available from us)



# LAMBETH HOUSING BENEFIT OF HORROR

**Lambeth Housing Benefit - what a Joke.** As anyone knows who's been there, it's like some nightmare 1984 scene, queueing up with over a hundred other stressed out people, usually to argue over why your benefit hasn't been paid despite filling in all your forms at least twice six months ago, them sending you a letter saying they've lost your file & you'll have to hand in again what you've already given them; ringing them up to have them put the phone down on you; trying to make an appointment - this week they'd stopped giving out tickets at 9.30 in the morning. All the while your landlord is on your back & you're either borrowing to pay the rent or building up arrears. Often landlords, even Housing Associations who say they'll wait for Housing Benefit to pay the rent,



start to take eviction proceedings while HB are still fucking about: assuming you don't just get your door booted in & your stuff slung out on the street... **80% of people who get evicted due to lost or delayed HB claims end up homeless.**

The Local Government Ombudsman has just reported that complaints against Lambeth Housing Benefit administration have seen a 1000% (yes that's a thousand percent!) increase. This is despite Lambeth's much noised semi-privatisation of the Service (the council's answer

to everything these days) last year in partnership with Capita Inc. Complaints to the Ombudsman, which you can only do after complaining to the council and getting nowhere, have increased in 5 years from 22 to 277. People are waiting over a year in some cases, to get any dosh at all. **Nice one Lambeth.**

Famously Lambeth HB a few years ago got so snowed under that one month they just paid everybody who claimed. Wahey! Sadly the next month they just binned all forms handed in. However we'd encourage HB workers to make friends with claimants & start being generous...

We at the Stress have got hold of a cool little booklet called the *Housing Benefit Survival Guide*, put together by claimants groups to help you get all you're entitled to. Send us an SAE & we'll put one in the post.



MAYDAY '99 - MAYDAY '99 - MAYDAY '99 - MAYDAY '99 - MAYDAY

**RECLAIM THE STREETS**

presents

**PARTY LINE**

**meet Tower of London, 2pm.**

**(Ending up at the Mayday Festival on Clapham Common)**

*To celebrate Mayday as International Workers' Day, and to party against the privatisation of the tube... The government's plans to sell off the underground will as usual put profit before passengers. London's tube is already the most expensive in Europe - fares will spiral higher as private profit takes over. As with the break up of British Rail, health & safety will be put at risk, services cut, & large scale redundancies/attacks on workers' pay & conditions will follow to boost fatcat profits...*

**LET'S MAKE A DIFFERENCE:**

Turning the tube into a place to get together, meet, chat, play, party... Bring friends, family, food & drink, toys, masks, decorations, music, games, banners, flags...

**REVEL AGAINST THE FATCATS!**

**Reclaim the Streets 0171 281 4621.**

London - No Victim - No Crime - May 1st '99

**World Wide Cannabis Action**

London Cannabis Action Program

**12 Noon:** 'Celebration of Cannabis March' assembles at Rush Common, Brixton, London, SW2. Tube: Brixton. March departs 12.30 pm for Clapham Common, arriving there 1.15pm. Bring good humour, banners, flags.

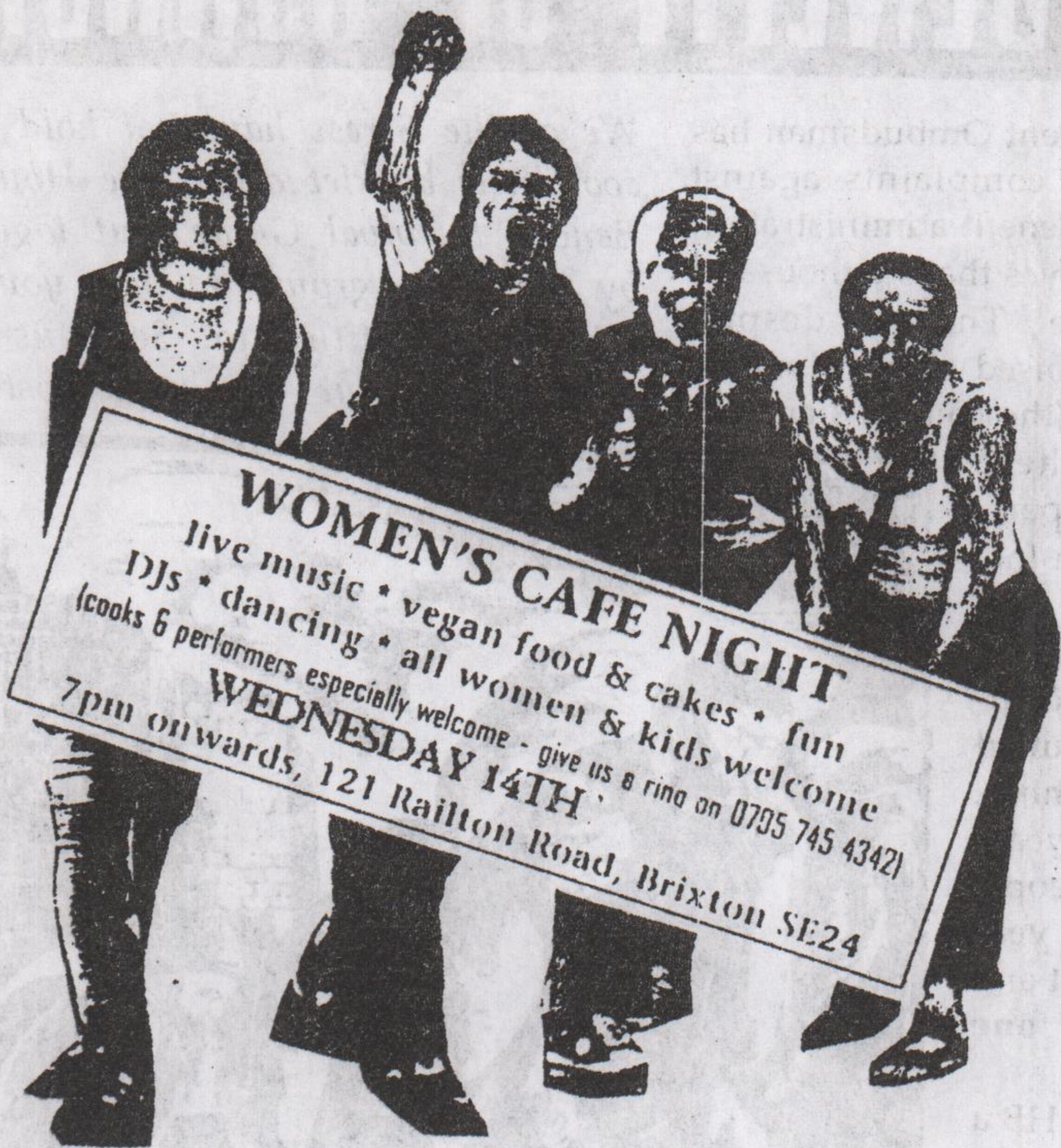
**1.30pm - 8.30pm:** A 'Celebration of Cannabis Free Festival' at Clapham Common, London. Speakers, live music, cannabis medical clinic, poets, comedians, hemp exhibition, sound systems, hemp ice cream, hemp beer, hemp fashion show, market, kids area, cake baking competition, raffle, debating tent. *Everyone invited!*

Mayday Information Line : 0171 637 7467

Part of the International Cannabis Coalition,  
PO Box 2243, London W1A 1YF, UK. Tel: 0171 637 7467.  
Fax: 0870 0548646. E Mail: mayday@schmoo.co.uk  
Web: <http://www.schmoo.co.uk/mayday.htm>



# OTHER EVENTS....



Tuesday 13 April: Reclaim the Streets meeting - Mexico, the Zapatistas, & the international struggle for land & Freedom. Video on "Zapatista Women", first hand accounts & discussion. 7pm. Room 33a, 1st Basement, Kings College (side entrance), The Strand WC1. Free/donation.

Keen-eyed Stress readers may have noticed that we failed to appear last week. (This wasn't due to fear after being threatened with prosecution by the Firkin pub chain after revealing that the toilets of Brixton's Flourmill & Firkin had hidden microphones in the ceiling. We're not scared of them no sir!) After 10 continuous weeks of publication on a shoe-string budget and plenty of other things going on taking up our time, we had to pause for a well-needed rest. Although the response to the Stress has been mostly great & positive (even Council Leader Slippery Jim 'Dastardly' Dickson often picks up a copy while doing his shopping in Brixton Market on Saturdays), we can't keep it going every week. To keep going at all, we need help & support: people to get in touch & tell us what's going on in the Lambeth area, to dish the dirt and blow the whistle; people to write or draw stuff for us; most of all, if you like the Stress, as we do, then get in touch to get a bundle and help distribute it - anywhere: through doors, handing it out in the street or the pub, in your local community centre. Or if you want to join our regular sessions giving it out drop us a line.

South London Stress, c/o 121 Centre, 121 Railton Road, SE24. or Box Stress, 56a info Shop, 56 Crampton St, SE17

## CIL...STILL HERE & STILL WORKING

After over 9 weeks of working occupation...Lambeth Centre for Independent Living is still alive! The CIL has been under the control of its disabled users, after having its grant cut by the coun-

them, and over the control/ownership of the Centre's assets. A favourable result might allow the CIL to carry on in new premises, and restore services lost due to the cuts. Lambeth's Social

Services Dept. have made 2 CIL staff redundant & transferred others to other organisations. The CIL are still fighting to keep the community the centre space gives them, and not have the services cut or parcelled out to other groups. With an eye to the future, the



"Let's see if we've got this right - you're trying to make us bankrupt because YOU'VE cut all of our funding?!"

cil...Services are still being maintained in the occupation. The CIL are currently negotiating with Lambeth Council for the release of remaining funds due to

CIL are holding a conference and fundraising gig on May 29th to discuss what comes next...Get in touch to offer support and help:

**Lambeth Centre for Independent Living, Barstow Crescent, Palace Road, SW2. Tel 0181 671 8892.**

## CONTACTS

**Friends of Lambeth Libraries:**  
0171 587 3517 or 0171 735 1672

**Movement For Justice:**  
community based anti-racist group opposing police harassment/govt attacks on refugees.  
PO Box 16581, London, SW2 2ZW.  
Tel: 07957 696636 or 0796 916 956

**Save The Vauxhall Tavern Campaign:**  
Fighting plans to develop Vauxhall Spring gardens and surrounding area into massive retail/leisure complex. 0171-737-4043

**Save our Schools:**  
tel 0181 674 3490.

**Tenants Corner:**  
Advice Centre for tenants and housing co ops  
Extensive Housing Archives. 46a Oval Mansions, Oval SE11.

Tel: 0171-582 7286

**56a Info Shop & Fareshares Food Co op:**  
56 Crampton St, Kennington SE17. Open Thurs/Fri 3-7 pm.

**121 Centre:**  
Still active! 121 Railton rd, Brixton, SE24 OLR. Tel: 0171 274 6655/0171 978 8214.  
e-mail: mark261@hotmail.com  
website: http://i.am/121centre