

# Checkout Chuckout!

## A DIY guide to stopping supermarket developments Corporate Watch/Grassroots Action on Food and Farming revised and updated August 2005

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### Introduction

Over the past thirty years there has been a dramatic and unchecked growth in the power of the supermarkets. The big supermarket chains now wield a huge influence over our lives - economically, socially, environmentally and culturally. They say they provide what consumers want - quick access to a wide choice of goods at low prices, but this frequently seems to run counter to the public interest, actually damaging local communities, local economies and the environment.

Although these corporations may appear big and powerful with friends in all the right places, armed with some knowledge of planning and campaigning tactics it is possible to take them on and chase them from our doorsteps!

As more and more communities decide to take action against the corporate takeover of their lives we've updated our popular guide (originally published in 1998) to give an overview of what happens when a big supermarket threatens to move in on your town - the impact they are likely to have on the local economy and the community and the tools and inspiration that you can use to oppose them.

The directory is not definitive but gives details of a selection of past, present, successful and not so successful local campaigns. All the contacts listed are happy to share

experiences and discuss strategies/tactics with other local groups campaigning against supermarkets. From Hammersmith<sup>1</sup> to Norwich<sup>2</sup> campaigning groups have won out against the might of supermarkets: campaigns have a great deal to learn and share from each other. There is also an extensive resource list.

### **Corporate concentration in food retailing**

Food retailing in the UK and globally is increasingly controlled by a small number of multinational corporations. In the UK we now buy 88% of our groceries in supermarkets and around 75% from just four supermarket chains – Tesco (30.4%), Asda-Walmart (16.6%), Sainsburys (15.9%) and Morrisons (11.5%).<sup>3</sup> Whilst Somerfield, Morrisons, M&S and Sainsburys are floundering, both Asda Wal-Mart and Tesco continue to turn in the impressive profits. To succeed in this cut-throat world, all of these chains have to keep expanding: through mergers and acquisitions, through price wars and through building more and more shops both in the UK and across the globe.

Over the past few years there has been a frenzy of corporate takeovers in the grocery retail market such as the takeover of Safeway by Morrisons, of Kwiksave by Somerfield and the buy-out of the T&S and Adminstore convenience-store chains by Tesco. As the number of food retailers falls, competition is diminished and the surviving corporations increase their market power and their economies of scale, enabling them to extract ever larger profits from their business.

Supermarkets also expand through poaching each others' customers in aggressive price wars. This clearly also affects smaller retailers who simply cannot compete with this buying power. US-based multinational, Wal-Mart, which bought Asda in 1999, has a well-documented deliberate strategy of destroying the economic and social fabric of small towns all across America by building out-of-town superstores, selling goods at rock bottom prices putting all other local retailers out of business, and then, when they have secured a near monopoly, increasing the prices again.<sup>4</sup>

In **Withensea**, North Yorkshire, Ian Proudfoot, owner of a chain of long-established local stores called on the Office of Fair Trading to intervene when Tesco opened a store nearby and sent letters to over 6000 households promising discounts of 40% to customers that spent over £20 in store. "*It is predatory pricing and an attempt to squash competition and dominate the catchment area,*" says Proudfoot, who believes that the supermarket chain is trying to put him out of business. Tesco also poached company staff, "*They came into my store and gave cards to staff they thought were hard working or they liked the look of,*" Proudfoot claims.<sup>5</sup> Whilst Proudfoot's sales plummeted, the OFT ruled that Tesco had not engaged in "abusive" trading.<sup>6</sup>

Driving this desire to conquer and consolidate is the logic of the corporate structure: that directors have a legal duty to make money for their shareholders (maybe your pension fund!).

Tesco is by far and away the biggest supermarket in the UK with 30.4%<sup>7</sup> of the market share, and the biggest expansion plans (111 stores opening in 2005/2006). In July 2005, Citigroup produced an analysis of the regional breakdown of those figures.<sup>8</sup> Among its findings: Tesco is the No1 operator in eight out of 10 regions in the UK; in London, where it is second to Sainsbury, it is catching up; Tesco is twice the size of Asda in food and growing twice as fast. It has more than 25% of the market in eight regions, 38% in the east of England and 37% in the South. Interestingly, this report came in the same week that the Competition Commission told Somerfield that its purchase of 14 relatively small former Safeway stores threaten local competition.

<sup>1</sup> Mira Bar-hillel And Charlie Parker 'Redgrave turns wrath on new Tesco store' 8/9/04 Evening Standard

<sup>2</sup> "Say No To Tesco on Unthank Road! <http://www.fielgarvie.co.uk/sut/>

<sup>3</sup> TNS Superpanel July 2005

<sup>4</sup> Bill Quinn *How Walmart is destroying America and what you can do about it* Ten Speed Press 1998

<sup>5</sup> Richard Fletcher 'Proudfoot cries foul at Tesco's tactics' 1/02/04 The Telegraph

<sup>6</sup> David Derbyshire 'Is Tesco getting to big for its own good?' 13/4/05 The Telegraph

<sup>7</sup> TNS figures quoted in The Guardian 30/7/05 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/story/0,3604,1539310,00.html>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

Despite being part of the biggest company in the world by sales, Asda Wal-Mart is losing market share to Tesco and, alongside price wars and cutting 1400 jobs in July 2005, is already lobbying for changes in planning legislation in the UK so that it can compete more effectively (see later).

### **The impact of supermarkets on the rest of the food supply chain**

Since the 1950s, food retailing in the UK has undergone a massive shift from high streets, covered markets and district centres full of small independent specialist food shops; grocers, greengrocers, bakers and butchers, to the domination of food retailing by the 'big four' supermarket chains; Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury's and Morrisons. In 1960 small independent retailers had a 60% share of the food retail market, supermarkets about 20%. Now the small independents share is reduced to 6%, while the multiples' share has increased to 88%.<sup>9</sup> A report from Manchester Metropolitan University suggests that at the current rate of their demise, there will be no independent retailers left by 2050.<sup>10</sup>

More than 13,000 specialist stores, including butchers, bakers, fishmongers and newsagents closed between 1997 and 2002, leaving many communities without accessible shops and services. The situation is so bad for small retailers, that an inquiry being held by the parliamentary All Party Small Shops Group in July 2005 into the complaints of the unfair dominance of retailing by grocery multiples had to be postponed because of the large level of responses.

Over the last five years, some of the big supermarket chains moved into the convenience store sector (c-stores). The Competition Commission report (2000) classified c-stores as a totally different sector to supermarket, which has allowed the big chains to acquire hundreds of convenience stores. Whilst Tesco has almost 30% of the supermarket market share, it only has 7% of the c-store sector through its acquisition of T&S stores and Administore in 2002 and 2004 respectively (see later section).

This also has a knock-on effect for wholesalers who also clearly cannot compete with supermarket low prices. Londis the national cornershop brand has admitted that it is cheaper to buy brands from Tesco and resell them than to get them from its wholesaler.

Suppliers are clearly caught in this imbalance of power, where a handful of companies can dictate terms, conditions and prices back to them. This has a knock-on effect throughout the supply chain, with the weakest links – small farmers, migrant workers, animals and the environment suffering the greatest exploitation. See Corporate Watch's briefing 'A Rough Guide to the Farming Crisis' (2004) for more information.

#### **Number of Supermarkets and Superstores 2005**

<b>Somerfield</b>	<b>1308</b>
<b>Tesco</b>	<b>2,365</b>
<b>Sainsburys</b>	<b>727</b>
<b>Asda</b>	<b>279</b>
<b>Morrisons</b>	<b>400</b>

#### **Definitions<sup>11</sup>**

A **supermarket** is a self-service grocery store that sells food, beverages and other goods. It is usually located on urban high streets or in shopping malls, covering an area of between 4 – 12,000 sq ft.

A **superstore** is a retail outlet specialising in grocery sales, although not exclusively

<sup>9</sup> Institute of Grocery Distribution, Grocery Retailing 2002: The Market Report, September 2002

<sup>10</sup> New Economics Foundation 'Ghost Town Britain: The Threat from Economic Globalisation to Livelihoods, Liberty and Local Economic Freedom' 2002

<sup>11</sup> Keynote 'Supermarkets and Superstores' 2001

selling food, of between 25 – 50,000 sq ft. Often located on the edge of towns or out of town.

A **hypermarket**, is a superstore over 50,000 sq ft. These are always out of town or in large out of town complexes, with extensive car parking. They offer a larger range of non-food products, such as DIY and garden products and electrical goods. French and US hypermarkets can be as big as 90,000 sq ft

## **Addressing the supermarket's claims for the likely benefits of a new store to your town...**

### **Supermarkets damage local economies and communities**

*"Independent planning consultants looked at our new store in Beverley...but far from damaging Beverley and its economy, the study found that Tesco acted as a magnet. ...Two-thirds of our customers visit other stores in the town centre, and local business leaders say that it has boosted Beverley's reputation as a place where people want to go to shop. So I would argue that strong supermarkets can also benefit local economies and local people."*<sup>12</sup>

Sir Terry Leahy, IGD Conference October 2004

*"Beverley didn't need Tesco, it was already a prosperous town. Tesco came to plunder not regenerate. They came to take money out of the economy of an already thriving and wealthy market town."*

Richard Wilson, retired lecturer, Beverley

When a supermarket arrives in town, a proportion of the local shops in direct competition will close down – this not only includes small independent retailers but also the high street multiples such as Boots, Argos and Dixons. This disappearance of other retailers not only changes the face of the high street and erodes choice, it impacts on the local economy. Very little of the wealth generated by the supermarkets stays within the local economy. Most of this is wages, although according to New Economics Foundation, Tesco's payroll makes up just 7% of its total turnover. Supermarkets are vacuum cleaners sucking money out of the community to corporate head offices and shareholders around the world.

While small independent shops often stock local products, despite supermarket claims, much of what is sold in supermarkets is not local. Their centralised distribution systems mean that 'local' products may be transported hundreds of miles to depots and then back to local superstores. Yet one of the best ways of keeping money in the local economy is through sourcing local produce. A study by the New Economics Foundation found that one pound spent in a local shop selling local produce puts twice as much money back into the local economy as one pound spent in a supermarket.

Local businesses tend to support the local economy by returning money to it by using local suppliers (builders, plumbers etc) and services (accountants, solicitors etc). For example, while a local shop may be refitted by a local carpenter, a supermarket will be refitted by a big contractor who is employed nationally to refit all of the supermarket's stores. Money circulating around the local economy keeps everyone buoyant.

However the ramifications of supermarket development go beyond the town and can have a negative effect on the rural economy in the surrounding area. Research by the former DETR and the Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee found that new out-of-centre and edge of centre supermarkets have a serious adverse impact on existing independent shops in surrounding villages and town centres, resulting in their decline and sometimes their closure.<sup>13</sup> Although it is deeply problematic, the government's national planning policy guidelines for retail development, Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres

<sup>12</sup> Nils Pratley and Julia Finch 'Shop tactics' 6 January 2005 The Guardian

<sup>13</sup> DETR *The Impact of Large Foodstores on Market Towns and District Centres* 1998; Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee *Second Report: Environmental Impact of Supermarket Competition* 2000

(2005) does at least call on the planning authority to assess the impact of building a new store on the surrounding village and district centres.

### **'Ghost town' Britain**

Supermarkets say that they do not have a negative impact on shopping centres, claiming instead that they act as 'magnets' increasing footfall into the shopping areas they move into, especially to shops selling specialist goods. This is true to some extent. Rab Smith, a record store owner from Dumfries, where Tesco opened a store in August 2004, argues that while local stores may still attract customers for the more specialist products that Tesco does not sell, Tesco sell all the 'best sellers' more cheaply than they could ever do. These 'best sellers' are vital to small retailers as they provide substantial and reliable sales,

*"The new Tesco in Dumfries now sells chart music cheaper than me, so people now only come to me for the rare stuff and the staple 35% of my income from chart music, has disappeared."*

The New Economics Foundation explains it like this: suppose a supermarket opens out-of-town or on the edge-of-the town centre, half the residents start doing a third of their shopping there, whilst still doing two thirds of their shopping in the town centre. Meanwhile the other half of the residents still do all their shopping in the town centre. There is only so much money circulating in the local economy, so although all the residents still use the town centre, its retail revenue is reduced. When shops start losing around 17% of their sales, they become unsustainable and are forced to close down.<sup>14</sup>

As a high street declines, it becomes increasingly unattractive to shoppers until the local economy reaches a 'tipping point' where the amount of money circulating is insufficient to maintain all the businesses. The result is 'a sudden and dramatic loss of services – leading to food and finance deserts'.<sup>15</sup> This desertification expresses itself in a several ways. In the case of big centres of population, we see the 'Clone town' effect – the same national retailer chains move in and the rest is charity shops and pound shops. In smaller market towns, there are two options – either 'pretty, but useless main streets with a dearth of everyday services' or irrevocable decline.

### **Edge of town centre sites: 'Spin away' rather than 'spin-offs'**

Research also shows that when supermarkets open in 'edge of town' centre sites, they can act as a 'gate keeper' for the town centre as in order to get to the high street, shoppers must pass by the store with its ample parking. A study by the former DETR (1998) which included two case studies of edge-of-centre supermarkets, concluded that "the principle effect of the new stores was to divert trade from the town centre to the edge-of-centre locations". This is especially true if pedestrian links between the locations are poor or the distance too great. Parking restrictions in supermarket car parks (for example restricted to two hours parking) can also discourage shoppers from visiting other shops.<sup>16</sup>

### **The 'Ghost town' effect in action: Fakenham, Stalham, Warminster and Dumfries**

When an out of town supermarket opened in the market town of **Fakenham**, Norfolk:

- 33% increase in retail vacancies in the town
- five of eighteen convenience stores closed
- convenience stores lost 64% of their previous trade
- the town centre environment noticeably deteriorated

**Stalham** another Norfolk market town has also suffered from the impact of an edge of town superstore. Tesco opened on the edge of Stalham in 2002 and it has already affected local shops' trade so much that some have closed down. The local Co-op is now a funeral parlour, the baker's has become a Chinese takeaway restaurant and the butcher had to go into wholesaling to survive. Turnover at the Stalham Shopper, a local grocery store, went down by

<sup>14</sup> New Economics Foundation 'Ghost Town Britain: The Threat from Economic Globalisation to Livelihoods, Liberty and Local Economic Freedom' 2002

<sup>15</sup> New Economics Foundation 'Ghost Town Britain II: Death on the High Street December 2003

<sup>16</sup> DETR, 1998, *The impact of large foodstores on market towns and district centres* HMSO.

50% but the owner is determined to stay open.<sup>17</sup>

Tesco built its car park on the market site, promising the market could continue on Tuesday mornings. But once its store was open, Tesco backtracked on this promise and the council had to relocate the market to a much less suitable site where it has now dwindled to a few stalls. Parking at Tesco is restricted to two hours and traders report that shoppers do not walk from the Tesco store to the high street.

In **Hunstanton**, which has a thriving Tesco, the petrol station has closed. Brian Nokes, manager of Scoop and Save, a general store, said he had lost a third of his takings when Tesco opened.<sup>18</sup> In **Warminster** the turnover of town centre convenience stores went down 75%<sup>19</sup>

In 2004, a Tesco store was built on the ring road on the outskirts of **Dumfries**. The old Tesco store took £300,000 a week, but the new store is taking around £1m a week. Rab Smith, chairman of the Dumfries Retailers Association, argues that this money is coming straight out of the town centre which is becoming a 'clone town' mainly occupied by charity shops, video shops and high street chain stores. The independent traders are losing around 24- 25% of their trade and the majors have lost about 12% of their trade – that's around £40,000 a week. The only four businesses that aren't losing out to Tesco are a kilt shop, a jewellers and two hairdressers. Over the last six months, Dumfries has lost at least a dozen shops, with another 20- 30 just about hanging on. On average there is one shop closing each week.<sup>20</sup>

### **Loss of distinctiveness: the 'Clone Town' effect**

In 2005, the New Economics Foundation (NEF) surveyed 130 villages, towns or city areas around Britain to highlight a new trend which they call 'Clone Town' Britain. This is a more subtle effect than the 'ghost town' effect, but equally as sinister. A 'clone town' is a place that has had the individuality of its high street shops replaced by a monochrome strip of global and national chains that mean its retail heart could easily be mistaken for dozens of other bland town centres across the country. The high street in Exeter, Devon, was identified as the worst clone town with only one independent shop – the rest were chains.

As NEF argue, 'The death of diversity undermines democracy, attacks our sense of place and belonging, and therefore well-being. It hands power to an unaccountable corporate elite; ultimately pulling apart the weave of natural systems upon which our livelihoods and our economy depend.'<sup>21</sup> NEF take inspiration from the 'Keep Louisville weird' campaign run in the town of Louisville, Kentucky to resist corporate blandness. [www.keeplouisvilleweird.com](http://www.keeplouisvilleweird.com)

In the words of retired lecturer and local Beverley resident, Richard Wilson,

*'East Riding Council says we must have a Tesco ... because footfall will bring trade into the town centre. But Tesco has caused a loss of distinctiveness, a change in the texture of the town. Take a look at what is on offer in Tesco compared to the home baked pies and cakes in the Deli. I can't imagine the discerning visitors we say we want to attract will keep on coming when they realise what is happening. Beverley's charm is declining and its prosperity has very little to do with multinationals, pound shops and mobile phone outlets.'*<sup>22</sup>

### **Closing down essential services: Post Offices**

When Tesco took over convenience store chain, T&S stores, in 2002 they went about converting the 1000 or so stores into Tesco Express format. To give customers the range of fresh produce they apparently want, this has meant sacrificing the post offices that are in

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in [www.rural-shops-alliance.com/success\\_stores/Stalham.htm](http://www.rural-shops-alliance.com/success_stores/Stalham.htm)

<sup>18</sup> Paul Brown, 'Secret deals with Tesco cast shadow over town' 22/1/04 The Guardian

<sup>19</sup> DETR report

<sup>20</sup> Pers.comm with Rab Smith, Dumfries Traders Association March 2005

<sup>21</sup> Clone Town Britain: The survey results on the bland state of the nation (June 2005)

<sup>22</sup> Personal communication 4/3/05

many of these stores. Pensioner Margaret Wardell, campaigning against the post office closures in Witney, told Friends of the Earth that the loss of the Post Office would leave 10,000 people in Witney without a local post office. She described how many pensioners depend on the post office to withdraw money, pay utility bills and council tax. It is too far to walk to the main post office for Margaret and she cannot stand for long in queues. Tesco have a national post-office closure programme with groups resisting across the country. See [www.everylittlehurts.org.uk/](http://www.everylittlehurts.org.uk/) for more details.

### **Closing down essential services: Car parks and access to public transport**

*'Since Tesco moved in, the company has gone against the co-operative spirit of its early negotiations and its car park has changed shoppers' habits in George Street – to the detriment of local traders'*

Keith Bryden, Business Association chairman and owner of Bryden's DIY<sup>23</sup>

When Tesco applied to build a store on a car park site in Hove, East Sussex, the plans were passed by all parties on the council because there was a perceived need for another supermarket for the many elderly residents in the area. Local businesses in Hove also cautiously welcomed Tesco, inviting the company to be a member of the Hove Business Association. However, since the new Tesco has opened, local businesses have been feeling the strain which they believe has to do not just with Tesco's financial clout, but with its commandeering of the major transport sites in the area – the local car park and the bus stop.

Tesco has taken over what used to be the 100-space car park for the street. It now has its own 336-space two hour-stay car park reserved for Tesco shoppers, with a £25 fine for overstayers. As a result shoppers using the only parking space available, Tesco's car park, don't have time to visit the local stores as well as Tesco, and there is now a traffic problem.

Local councillor, Averil Older, believes that the council made a big mistake letting Tesco have the car park. Tesco's control over the car park brings 'no benefit to George Street – which Tesco was supposed to boost'. The Business Association has pleaded with Tesco to open the car park up to other trade but so far it has refused to engage. Mark Mulholland, managing director of Mulhollands' off-licence says he has lost trade since a bus stop was moved from further up the road and put outside his shop to accommodate Tesco customers. This has made it impossible for drivers to draw up, park and drop into his shop.

### **Loss of essential services: public and community space**

Councils frequently sell off public spaces and community facilities for supermarket development. In **Beverley**, Yorkshire, the council sold off the historic cattle market and main town centre car park to Tesco. Local people lament the loss of this historic site and town centre traders say the car park is considerably reduced in size and fewer people are shopping in the town centre. The sale of the cattle market also starkly represents the supremacy of the supermarket model of food production. In **Stalham**, North Norfolk, the council again sold the town car park to Tesco, this had also been the site of the town's thriving market, which has been forced to move to an inferior location.

In **Sheringham**, North Norfolk, Tesco secured an agreement with North Norfolk district council and Norfolk county council to relocate the community centre, fire station and a block of flats used for social housing in order to secure a prime location for its supermarket.<sup>24</sup> In **Hodge Hill, Birmingham**, the city council is currently proposing to sell off part of a playing field to Tesco.<sup>25</sup> In **Workington**, after a failed attempt to get a controversial greenfield site listed as 'common land' a local campaigner submitted his own planning proposal for a wildlife haven and adventure playground on a site threatened by supermarket development. The site is venue for the ancient game of 'Uppies and Downies' which will be lost if the development goes ahead.<sup>26</sup> In **Hammersmith**, West London, property developers in cahoots with Tesco, were asking the

<sup>23</sup> 'Why Tesco could damage town centres' Friends of the Earth MP briefing November 2004

<sup>24</sup> 'Secret deals with Tesco cast shadow over town'

<sup>25</sup> 'Hodge Hill fields next on Tesco wish list' Gareth Davies *The Telegraph* 23/2/05

<sup>26</sup> 'Workington: Grandfather aims to scupper Tesco plans' Times and Star 7/6/05

council not only for the demolition of the local cinema, but of a Quaker meeting house, a block of council flats - many of which are now owned by their former tenants - and a Thomas Pocklington Trust home for the visually impaired.

### **Regenerating run down inner cities?**

Supermarkets don't just have market towns in their sights but inner city areas as well. Often local 'regeneration' is seen as a way in, with the supermarket chains claiming to be working in 'less attractive areas' and creating jobs for the long-term unemployed out of the goodness of their hearts. *The Grocer* has a slightly different take: *'Regeneration projects can gain speedy approval from councils and local communities. A whole regeneration package, promising mixed use development...is likely to prove far more attractive to planners than just a plain old superstore.'*<sup>27</sup>

Quite how a big supermarket chain can claim to 'regenerate' an area is unclear – it takes money out of the local economy and spirits it away to directors and shareholders, therefore not creating wealth to circulate in local businesses. As one of the biggest backers of the New Deal, Tesco is actually being paid a government subsidy of £60 a week and £750 training allowance for some of the 'long term unemployed' staff that it takes on. Tesco mentions several times how it takes on the long term unemployed, it does not however, mention its involvement with the New Deal.

Some researchers have highlighted that where Tesco move into an areas of long term unemployment, local people become dependent on Tesco for employment and if Tesco were to withdraw the unemployment rate would rise again. Tesco may also provide training, but this is very specific to its corporate culture and needs.<sup>28</sup>

Meanwhile, supermarket-led regeneration projects pose wider questions about democracy and the role of corporations in increasingly taking over the functions that we have expected to be carried out by local authorities and government. Is the corporation, which is both unaccountable and legally obliged to put profit over society, really the best agent to do this?

### **Creating jobs?**

When a new store is planned, supermarkets frequently claim that they will benefit the local economy by bringing jobs to the area. What they don't say is that the arrival of the supermarket also means job losses due to the closure of small shops and associated businesses, and these are not compensated for by supermarket openings.

The National Retail Planning Forum, embarrassingly financed by the supermarkets themselves, found that despite the job gains when a large supermarket opens, on average there is a net loss of 276 full time jobs within a 15km zone around the store, through the closure of smaller specialist food retailers and other small businesses that previously serviced the small shops.<sup>29</sup>

Figures also don't add up to support supermarkets' claim to generate employment, with small grocery shops shown to represent greater employment. In 2004, UK small grocery shops had a turnover of around £21bn and employed more than 500,000, whilst Tesco with its £29bn turnover employed just 250,000. As retail sales grow for supermarkets this has clearly not translated into new jobs.

Are supermarkets really committed to creating jobs in the UK? Last year Tesco outsourced its IT and invoicing work to India with the loss of 460 jobs in the UK.<sup>30</sup> Tesco also trialled bringing in 60 Polish staff to its regional distribution centre near Milton Keynes in 2005 only weeks after

<sup>27</sup> Quoted in 'Shopped' pg. 29

<sup>28</sup> Thanks to Annabel Dixon at Newcastle University for sharing her unpublished research on Tesco's Dragonville Regeneration Partnership, Durham.

<sup>29</sup> Porter and Rastrick 'The impact of out of centre food superstores on local retail employment' The National Retail Planning Forum January 1998

<sup>30</sup> Tesco 'Corporate Responsibility Review 2003-2004'

<http://www.tesco.com/everylittlehelps/downloads/TescoCRreview0304.pdf>, viewed 3/3/05

352 jobs were lost at a nearby chilled food depot.

In the long run, all the supermarkets want to cut costs and one way to do that is to replace staff with technology – many supermarkets are using or are considering using 'self-checkout', where customers pass the food over a scanner, pay by debit or credit card and pack it themselves – and checkout workers are out of a job!

The supermarkets often claim that they provide bring skills and training to the local area, but what kind of jobs are they? Supermarket jobs are typically low paid, unskilled and frequently part-time. Figures from the National Earnings Survey in 2001 show that two out of the worst 10 paid jobs for men and women are to be found in the supermarket sector. Check-out operators was the second worst paid job for men with an average hourly rate for full-time workers of just £5.03. Shelf stackers are number 10 on the list with £5.70. For women, the situation is similarly depressing. Check-out operators come in at number eight of the 10 worst paid at £5.12 an hour and shelf stackers also at number 10 at £5.82.<sup>31</sup> Tesco chief executive, Terry Leahy, who was paid £4.3m in 2004, earns 350 times the average Tesco worker.<sup>32</sup>

Compared with national averages, supermarkets continue to pay very low wages, The GMB union says that although the average wage at Tesco is now £6.03 hour – more than its competitors – at these rates Tesco workers would have to work 79 hours a week to achieve the national average wage. According to Phil Davies, national secretary for the food and leisure sector at the GMB,

*'Staff at supermarkets have historically faced low wages, and it is time for them to get the respect they deserve....This sector is dominated by part-time women workers often trying to support a family on this pittance.'*<sup>33</sup>

Wal-Mart is well know in the US for being anti-union. In 1999, as Wal-Mart was poised to take over Asda, Charles Kernaghan, director of the US National Labor Committee, referring to the company's labour record in the US gave a warning:

*'If British people knew more about Wal-Mart, they'd be quite frightened. Wal-Mart is the nastiest company we've dealt with. It has no moral compass. It tours the world looking for workers willing to accept the lowest pay and the least benefits...'*<sup>34</sup>

Supermarket workers remain notoriously under-represented by unions. Despite their best efforts, trade unions have yet to gain a real foothold. Less than half of Tesco's 250,000 workers are members of a union, according to the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers and only a fraction of employees at the other big players have representation with Asda coming out worst.<sup>35</sup> Despite Wal-mart's denial of the claim that it is anti-union, since the takeover of Asda, the GMB has seen its presence threatened by the supermarket's reluctance to publicise the union's existence among employees.

Author Joanna Blythman who worked on the checkout tills for her book *Shopped*, also raises some important health and safety concerns. *'Helping customers pack is all very well, but doing that and scanning goods at the same time involves twisting and stretching your torso in an unnatural way, often putting downward weight on wrists.'*

This, along with the lack of daylight and fresh air, infrequent breaks, the omnipresent threat of random violence from customers and constant beeping of the scanner makes working at the checkout seem an unattractive job.

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<sup>31</sup> Mary O'Hara 'Store wars: who will be the casualties ' 25 January 2003 The Guardian [http://www.guardian.co.uk/guardian\\_jobs\\_and\\_money/story/0,,881462,00.html](http://www.guardian.co.uk/guardian_jobs_and_money/story/0,,881462,00.html), viewed 28/3/05

<sup>32</sup> Jill Treanor, Julia Finch, and Charlotte Moore '£26m Puts Tesco at Top of the Table' 27 August 2004 The Guardian <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/story/0,,1291935,00.html>, viewed 28/3/05

<sup>33</sup> Terry Macalister '£11m Bonus for Tesco Boardroom' 18 May 2004 The Guardian <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/story/0,,1219122,00.html>, viewed 28/3/05

<sup>34</sup> Conal Walsh 'Walmart is anti-union and has used sweatshops' 26 January 2003 The Observer <http://observer.guardian.co.uk/business/story/0,6903,882102,00.html>, viewed 28/03/05

<sup>35</sup> Mary O'Hara 'Store wars: who will be the casualties ' 25 January 2003 The Guardian

## Generating traffic

Out- or edge-of-town supermarkets not only divert shoppers from the high street but also lead to a massive dependence on car transport for shopping, restricting access to the elderly and those without cars. Three quarters of supermarket customers travel by car and when new stores open they generate more traffic. Roughly one in ten car journeys are to buy food,<sup>36</sup> and it is estimated that CO<sub>2</sub> emissions generated by shopper miles equal those generated by food freight within the UK.<sup>37</sup>

Instead of generating new trade to town centre, it is likely that the increased congestion from cars and delivery lorries actually put shoppers off coming into the town centre altogether. In a recently rejected application in **Unthank, Norfolk**, it was the threat of congestion and accidents that swayed the council against the Tesco store.<sup>38</sup>

Supermarkets also generate vast amounts of delivery traffic, particularly heavy lorries. They have centralised distribution systems and 'just in time delivery', so that very little stock is held in the stores and they must be topped up daily, by a fleet of delivery lorries, from a regional distribution centre.

Tesco Express in **Kew, London** occupies a former Europa outlet in a parade of shops in a residential area. Since Tesco moved in, deliveries have increased from twice a day to up to 10 times a day, between 6am and 11 at night, using a local school bus stop as their loading bay. Pallets, metal trolleys and unloading ramps crash down on to the pavements. Truck engines are kept running. After complaints by local residents and councillors Tesco was told to limit its deliveries to just three a day, between 7am and 8pm. But locals say nothing has changed and there are still back-to-back deliveries until 12pm. The Kew experience is not unique. Local residents in nearby St Margaret's, Twickenham, are protesting at an almost identical set of problems, including delivery lorries blocking school buses.<sup>39</sup>

## How supermarkets have circumvented planning controls

### Curbing the growth of out-of-town supermarkets

The damage created by the growth of out-of-town retailing to town centres, the local economy and the countryside was recognised by the Conservative Government in 1993 when it introduced *Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 on Transport (PPG13)* which required the consideration of locally accessible shops in planning decisions.<sup>40</sup> At the same time, *Planning Policy Guidance Note 6 on Town Centres and Retail Development (PPG6)* was revised to protect town centres against out-of-town developments in 1993 and then again in 1996. Local authorities were advised to use a 'sequential approach', and to only grant planning permission for out-of-town sites where there were no viable alternatives firstly in the town and secondly on the edge-of-town.<sup>41</sup>

Whilst this revised planning guidance did not prevent all new store development, there has been a sharp decline in new planning approvals for out-of-town superstores,<sup>42</sup> with most retail development forced to move to brownfield sites in town centres or to edge-of-town centre sites. But there are still planning applications on out-of-town sites outstanding and the big supermarkets have substantial reserves of land in anticipation of development opportunities

<sup>36</sup> Based on figures from 'Travel to the Shops in GB, personal travel fact-sheet 6' Department of Transport, 2003

<sup>37</sup> Food shop to home car journeys generate 20% - 50% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from food transportation within the UK.

Tara Garnett 'Wise Moves: exploring the relationship between food, transport and CO<sub>2</sub>' 2003 Transport 2000 Trust

<sup>38</sup> [www.stopunthanktesco.com](http://www.stopunthanktesco.com)

<sup>39</sup> Nils Pratley and Julia Finch 'Shop Tactics ' 6 January 2005 The Guardian

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/g2/story/0,,1384171,00.html>, viewed 28/3/05

<sup>40</sup> Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions 'The impact of large food stores on market towns and district centres' 1998 [www.planning.detr.gov.uk/foodstores/index.htm](http://www.planning.detr.gov.uk/foodstores/index.htm); House of Commons Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee 'Second report: Environmental impact of supermarket competition' 2000

[www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199900/cmselect/cmenvtra/120/12002.htm](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199900/cmselect/cmenvtra/120/12002.htm)

<sup>41</sup> DTLR, 'Planning Policy Guidance Note 6: Town centres and retail development'

[www.planning.dtlr.gov.uk/ppg/ppg6/index.htm](http://www.planning.dtlr.gov.uk/ppg/ppg6/index.htm)

<sup>42</sup> Sustain 'Battle in Store? A discussion of the social impacts of the major supermarkets' 2000

should the government weaken its opposition to out-of-town development.<sup>43</sup>

### **The supermarkets' responses**

With planning controls putting a stop to further out-of-town sprawl, the supermarkets moved back into market towns and the local high streets of large conurbations. Tesco says that stores in market towns now form the core of its business,<sup>44</sup> and both Tesco and Sainsburys have shifted their expansion programmes to focus on smaller format inner city stores such as Tesco 'Metro' and Sainsbury's 'Central' and petrol forecourt shops (Tesco Express/Esso, Sainsburys Local/Shell). Sainsburys Local and Tesco Express/Extra are also beginning to replace neighbourhood convenience stores. Tesco currently has 6-7% of this convenience store market, but analysts expect that to increase sharply over the next couple of years.

Asda still favours big out-of-town sheds because it is here that the supermarkets really make their money. Out-of-town superstores allow them to focus on large non-food goods, economies of scale and acres of free car parking space, which give them an enormous advantage over city centre stores. Asda has been especially keen since it found a planning loophole that has allowed it to double the size of its existing stores by building a mezzanine level within the store, significantly increasing sales space, without planning permission. Asda had planned to build a total of 40 mezzanine floors in its existing stores, but this loophole is soon set to close, with new legislation requiring supermarkets to obtain planning permission for increases in retail floorspace of 200m<sup>2</sup> or over. Asda is still planning to build new out-of-town Asda/Wal-Mart supercentres of around 90,000 ft.

### **The UK government and planning legislation**

The big supermarket chains clearly have the ear of Government who show no sign of breaking the power of the supermarkets. This is partly to do with the supermarket culture within New Labour: Lord Sainsbury, government minister and major New Labour financier, is thought to have successfully lobbied the government to soften its line on supermarket development. Furthermore, as former Blair advisers such as Lucy Neville-Rolfe, Philip Gould and David North pass seamlessly between the Cabinet Office and Tesco it is fairly likely that the supermarkets are heavily influencing government policy in many areas, not least the relaxation of planning controls.<sup>45</sup>

It is also to do with direct lobbying. In July 2005, Asda representatives visited the Deputy Prime Minister's office, No 10 and the Treasury to urge the government to change the test used by competition authorities so that it can open up new space to compete directly with Tesco. Asda is pushing for the 'adequate provision' test to be replaced to 'adequate competition' to overturn the first mover advantage' which has effectively meant that only one superstore is permitted in an area and no more.<sup>46</sup>

It is also important to understand that at heart, New Labour embraces neo-liberalism, an ideology that sees planning legislation as anti-competitive, in that it stops companies from doing what they want to do and adds costs. This is the reason why new planning policy is a slimmed down and faster procedure.

There are also good macro economic reasons for the government not to break the power of the supermarkets – the competition between Tesco and Asda keep prices and hence inflation down. This may be good for economic stability but at what cost!

### **New planning policy continues to support edge-of-town sites**

*"I know that the big retailers can put pressure on local stores, and we have to be aware of this, but which is worse: the major retailers leaving the towns completely or having the big*

<sup>43</sup> Colin Breed 'Checking out the Supermarkets II: Competition in Retailing' March 2003

<sup>44</sup> Tesco website 'Tesco and Market Towns'  
[http://www.tesco.com/everylittlehelps/downloads/TescoCR\\_MarketTowns.pdf](http://www.tesco.com/everylittlehelps/downloads/TescoCR_MarketTowns.pdf), viewed 3/3/05

<sup>45</sup> For more details on Tesco's influence on government see Corporate Watch 'Tesco: A Corporate Profile' 2004 <http://www.corporatewatch.org.uk/profiles/tesco/tesco3.htm>, viewed 28/3/05

<sup>46</sup> Sarah Ryle 'Asda demands planning freedom to tackle Tesco' 17/7/07 The Observer

*retailers trading downtown, bringing in more money and more people into the town centre as a whole."*

John Prescott, Deputy Prime Minister<sup>47</sup>

Perhaps as a result of supermarket lobbying power, the government continues to 'fail' to acknowledge that large stores can be equally damaging to the vibrancy and diversity of a retail centre, whether they are out-of-town or on the edge-of-town centres.<sup>48</sup>

New national *Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS6)*, which replaces PPG6, continues to actively support edge-of-centre large scale development, specifically requiring local authorities to identify sites for the provision of large format stores on the edge-of-town centres, on the basis that larger stores 'may deliver benefits for consumers'.<sup>49</sup> As town centre development sites of a suitable size for large format stores become fewer and fewer, then proposals for edge-of-centre development become increasingly likely. PPS6 also permits development on out-of-town sites where no other suitable sites are available. A national policy supporting such large scale developments will make it that much harder for local authorities to resist proposals for these stores, despite community concerns about their likely impact. PPS6 also calls for the 'managed decline' of retail areas that can't be sustained. Farmers' markets and other alternatives get one small paragraph.

### **Putting pressure on local councils**

*"These guys are professionals and are in for the long haul. They have plenty of experience from around the country in winning planning permission – from PR campaigns in the local press to planning experts and expensive lawyers. What can we, a bunch of amateurs, do to stop them?"*

Charles C, a local anti-supermarket campaigner in Shaftesbury, Dorset

Supermarkets plan their 'campaigns' well in advance - purchasing sites in prime locations, approaching council officials and doing deals, and running well-orchestrated media campaigns in the local press. Only once the site is secured and agreements have been made with planning officials (often involving the purchase of council land), will planning be sought.<sup>50</sup>

The big supermarkets also have the resources to play a very long game to get what they want. Tesco fought for 8 years, against a determined local campaign, in order to win approval for its development in Sheringham, North Norfolk.

On paper, there are grounds for local authorities to refuse permission for a new supermarket, but they may be reluctant to do so if they think the supermarket will appeal, after all the resources at the disposal of the big supermarkets are many times greater than those of the local council.

Traders in **Sheringham** feel let down by the local council because although the proposed development was originally refused planning permission by an area planning committee, it was subsequently approved by the full committee, after Tesco threatened to go to appeal and claim costs from the council if the application was refused. But as John Sweeney, leader of North Norfolk District Council puts it,

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<sup>47</sup> Peter Hetherington "Spread of out-of-town superstores halted, says Prescott" 14/7/05 The Guardian

<sup>48</sup> Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions 'The impact of large food stores on market towns and district centres' 1998 [www.planning.detr.gov.uk/foodstores/index.htm](http://www.planning.detr.gov.uk/foodstores/index.htm); Friends of the Earth 'Why the new PPS6 could damage town centres' November 2004 [http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/briefings/pps6\\_damage\\_town\\_centres.pdf](http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/briefings/pps6_damage_town_centres.pdf), viewed 27/3/05

<sup>49</sup> ODPM Planning Policy Statement 6, section 2.6 [http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm\\_planning/documents/page/odpm\\_plan\\_036805.pdf](http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_planning/documents/page/odpm_plan_036805.pdf), viewed 27/3/05

<sup>50</sup> Paul Brown 'Store Wars in the Shires' 17 March 2005 The Guardian <http://society.guardian.co.uk/societyguardian/story/0,,1170415,00.html>, viewed 28/3/05

*'They are too big and powerful for us. If we try and deny them, they will appeal, and we cannot afford to fight a planning appeal and lose. If they got costs it could bankrupt us.'*<sup>51</sup>

In **Stockport, Manchester**, a Tesco has already been built that is nearly 2,000m<sup>2</sup> bigger than originally planned. Tesco has applied to the council for retrospective planning permission for the extra floorspace which it insists is only for storage. But 217 local traders have signed a petition urging the council to serve an enforcement notice on Tesco, meaning the store will go back to its original size. Steve Parfett of Parfett's Cash and Carry, who says the extra space is the equivalent of 19 independent shops insists,

*'What Tesco has done is outrageous. No one else would get away with it. If I had done something like this, the council would be down on me like a tonne of bricks. Its one rule for us and another for Tesco who rely on their fire power, nuisance value and the fact that the council would be wary to issue an enforcement order in case Tesco appealed and the Council lost and costs were awarded against them.'*

In **Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire**, locals waged a five-year campaign against a Tesco store. Despite massive opposition, the store eventually got permission after Tesco's appeal was given approval by John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, after a planning inquiry. Before it had even been built, Tesco have applied to extend the floor area by 40%. *"It is absolutely cynical,"* says Peter Hardy, leader of South Buckinghamshire district council. *"They get an application that is just about acceptable and then bring in plans for something that was never envisaged."*<sup>52</sup> In a further twist to the story, Tesco's plans are now hanging in the balance after a controversial rail tunnel, being moved to accommodate Tesco's building plans, collapsed. Local resident, Gail Clarke said: *"When I heard that no one was hurt in the collapse I did a merry jig. Tesco's reputation will be in tatters after this fiasco, and they deserve all the flak they get."*<sup>53</sup>

### **Planning gain – Legitimate bribery!**

Planning legislation recognises 'planning gain', where supermarkets offer to build infrastructure or new amenities for local councils in return for planning permission, as a legitimate sweetener offered by the supermarkets. These section 106 agreements, mainly intended to ameliorate the effect of the development through the construction of new roads, roundabouts and pedestrian crossings as well as leisure facilities (such as the new cricket pavilion built by Tesco in Shaftesbury), are obviously very attractive to cash-strapped local authorities.

And its not just in Sheringham that local authorities are bending over backwards to accommodate the supermarkets' development proposals on town centre sites, local councils around the country have traded away community facilities, memorial gardens, allotments, social housing and an old soldiers' club in order to facilitate supermarket development. In Hadleigh, Babergh district council has altered the district plan so that Tesco can build on a flood plain - directly against national policy.<sup>54</sup>

### **Bulldozing protest**

Currently, only the applicant i.e. the supermarket, can appeal against a planning decision if it goes against them. Objectors have no right of appeal. Despite widespread support for this right of appeal and the fact that the lack of such a right appears to contravene article 6 of the Human Rights Act the government has not taken the opportunity to give third parties (e.g. the opponents of supermarket developments) the right of appeal against a planning decision.

## **Understanding the new local planning system**

<sup>51</sup> Paul Brown 'Secret deals with tesco cast shadow over town' 22 January 2004 The Guardian [http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk\\_news/story/0,,1128386,00.html](http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk_news/story/0,,1128386,00.html), viewed 28/3/05

<sup>52</sup> Nils Pratley and Julia Finch 'Shop Tactics ' 6 January 2005 The Guardian <http://www.guardian.co.uk/g2/story/0,,1384171,00.html>, viewed 28/3/05

<sup>53</sup> Lewis Smith 'Railway tunnel collapse will cost Tesco millions' 2/7/05

<sup>54</sup> Ibid

The new English planning system came into force in April 2004. It is confusing and you might think why bother? But the planning system will shape your local community and have a major impact on your environment and your quality of life. Planning should be a democratic system for the control of a piece of land, and it is a vital way of ensuring that local development is driven by community needs. Don't let the jargon put you off – use the planning system!

The Government talks a lot about involving people in local democracy, but in reality it wants to prevent communities having legally enforceable rights to raise concerns and objections. Why? Because these rights might get in the way with the vast development plans the Government has for the areas like the South East.

Under the new system, England is broken down into Regional Spatial Strategies where only established NGO's will be invited to determine planning policy, despite the fact that this is the place where major decisions will be made. Individuals do have a right to be heard at the local level, where Local Plans have been replaced by Local Development Frameworks. The Friends of the Earth guide, a local campaigner's guide to the new local planning system (January 2005) will help you to use this new system. (see resources section). The reform of planning in Wales has far less drastic than in England and the proposals do not apply to Northern Ireland.

## **Step by step guide to launching your campaign**

Fighting as planning case and running a campaign are challenging but remember these steps:

### **Stage 1 Know your enemy**

Do some research on the supermarket's own website, and on some critical websites such as Corporate Watch, Friends of the Earth, New Economics Foundation, Tesco etc.

### **Stage 2 Build local support**

- Develop clear messages about the impact of the store to help you get across your concerns to the press and public. Write some 20 word sound-bites stating exactly what you want.
- Run a positive campaign, suggesting creative alternatives for the use of the land, and more ecologically and socially sound ways to buy food such as farmers' markets and food co-ops.
- Draw up a list of local media contacts to inform of developments.
- Write and distribute leaflets to those likely to be affected or concerned by the development.
- Contact small retailers, local residents, environmental and community groups.
- Make links with small local business organisations e.g. the local Chamber of Commerce or local branch of the Federation of Small Businesses. Or even another supermarket that will be adversely affected by the application, especially for financial resources!
- Be sensitive to the views of local traders who may have reasons for not wanting a high profile involvement in the campaign.
- Contact some of the groups listed in the directory for tips on how to build your campaign and for ideas for text for leaflets and press releases.
- Invite local celebrities, supermarket campaigners from elsewhere and 'experts' to address a public meeting. Another format would be a 'debate' with the supermarket concerned.
- Talk to local councillors who may be happy to help in private, although may not be so open about support publicly. Remember the personal politics that are likely to be involved too.
- The local media loves planning battles, but be aware how you may be portrayed. It's best to tap into local concerns so as not to come across as 'mad environmentalists'.

### **Stage 3 Be clear about the planning process**

- Get to grips with the local planning system, see the FOE and CPRE planning websites ([www.planninghelp.org.uk](http://www.planninghelp.org.uk)) for easy to digest guides to the local planning process. Familiarise yourself with Planning Policy Statement 6 which sets out the government's national policy on town centre and local retail development. Find out what the regional and local policies say about retail development in your area.
- To find out more about a planning application, check the council's website, the Planning

Portal website ([www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk)), look out for site notices, check the local press, talk to local councillors, get a circulation list for new applications and share the task with like-minded groups.

- Make 'face to face' contact with your local planning officers to make them aware of your concerns. They can also explain local policies to you. It's always good to keep on friendly terms with them - its amazing how much more co-operative and indiscreet local government officers can be if you're nice to them. Sometimes applicants have had pre-negotiations with the Council before making an application. Ask the planning officer if this has taken place.
- Find out which planning officers are dealing with the application; when the planning committee meetings are; who the committee members are and which of them might be sympathetic to your arguments; which councillors might be sympathetic to your arguments and how you can influence the full council meeting. It might help to draw a diagram of who makes decisions at various stages, and how they can be influenced.

#### **Stage 4      Develop your arguments**

- It's best to concentrate your fire in a complex planning case. Rather than trying to say something about everything, work out your strongest arguments bearing in mind the six tests that the planners will be using to consider the application. In most retail applications these will be about the traffic impact of the new store and its impact on the vitality of the existing town centre. Check out the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website [www.odpm.gov.uk](http://www.odpm.gov.uk) for details of previous planning cases to see what arguments have been used to beat the developers.
- Look out for the supermarket's strategy. They will employ a PR firm and sell messages about new jobs and other benefits to the area. They may also be offering 'planning gains' in the form of new roads, playgrounds, football stadiums etc. Prepare your counter attack. Argue that these 'benefits' will not outweigh the negative impacts. Strong local opposition to a development, together with sound arguments, could persuade the planning committee to reject it.
- Hold a letter writing evening to get loads of objections in.

#### **Stage 5      Dealing with Appeals and Public Enquiries**

- Even if the planning committee reject the application, supermarkets frequently go to appeal. If it's of regional or national importance, it might also get 'called in' for a public inquiry. So be prepared for a long and complex battle fighting the planning case. Supermarkets will use their financial muscle to get the best lawyers, planning and transport consultants. Take them on yourselves by all means (see the directory for details of folk who have successfully done just that) or get some help from friendly planners and legal contacts.
- The appeals procedure: if it is refused, the company has six months in which to apply to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister who may appoint an independent inspector to look into the case. If appointed, the inspector looks at the original reasons for refusal, the applicant's case and the position of other interested parties. A report will then either grant or refuse permission. This can be appealed at the High Court but this is rare. However, with so many appeals being lodged it would probably take at least ten months before an inspector could even get started. The alternative is for the company to submit a new request for planning permission but they could not do this for another two years

#### **Stage 6      And if they win**

- As the law stands at the moment, objectors have no right of appeal. But even if the store gets permission, the access roads could be refused etc.
- In several cases, stores have been designed specifically to allow expansion at some later date (often despite assurances to the contrary) so be ready to fight again in the future.
- And develop a campaign to support your local shops/reinvigorate the town centre, see the 'Loyalty to Leominster' campaign or contact the 'Tools for Local Economic Renewal' project at the New Economics Foundation which provides workshops and resources to local communities to help them take action to revive their local economies. From farmers'

markets to mobile shops and 'use your convenience store better' campaigns there are many alternatives to shopping at supermarkets.

Finally, enjoy your campaign. Good luck!

## **Direct action**

Direct action is not just something to turn to as a last resort as the contractors move in, but a tactic that can be used throughout your campaign. It's proved effective in stopping other developments around the country. It gives your community the chance to impose direct financial costs on the corporation that has ignored its views and to raise public awareness about the proposed development.

Direct action early in your campaign might also put the developer off, draw some unwelcome publicity for the corporation and boost your support among the local community. Local people managed to stop a supermarket development in Yeovil by squatting on the roof of the building proposed for the redevelopment. Squatting has also bought time for campaigns in Brighton and on the Old Kent Road. Once one store has a foothold in a town or community, its rivals will be watching very closely, eager to pounce too. Towns rarely stop at just one major store. So even if direct action doesn't stop the store it's targeting, the next developer may not want to face that kind of opposition. Contact your local Earth First! group for tips or to see if they want to join the campaign.

## **Dealing with a diversity of views locally**

When you set up a campaign against a supermarket development in your area, there are undoubtedly going to be a range of different responses from total support to downright anger. In Castle Douglas, Dumfries and Galloway, a group of residents, so annoyed at the success anti-Tesco campaign, set up a pro-Tesco campaign canvassing on the opposite side of the road with a petition FOR Tesco.

It is understandable that people want better, closer and 'cheaper' shopping facilities, especially the elderly and infirm. To some people, a campaign against a big supermarket chain is seen as an attack on their right to access these facilities, or at least an attack on what is perceived as 'decent' competition which would improve the existing shopping facilities. These debates represent the conflict between self-interest, sometimes justified in the case of food poverty, and people trying to have some wider vision for their community and environment.

Given the evidence shown above, anyone that has even an inkling of an idea about how their local economy works or has seen the same pattern of 'ghost town' or 'clone town' Britain happening elsewhere, understands that a big supermarket is not a good thing for the community at large. The public also need to be reminded that 'cheap' food comes at a cost – exploitation, environmental destruction and animal abuse, and that the taxpayer pays the cost for tidying up after industrial farming. Supermarkets may seem the obvious way to tackle food poverty, but they also take the least imagination – there are numerous options for inexpensive food provision. Remember: it is not NEGATIVE to campaign against a supermarket, its POSITIVE for the community, local economy and the environment.

Of course, sometimes opposition to a supermarket will be motivated entirely by self-interest. As you will discover, the campaign will bring together strange bedfellows who wouldn't necessarily have common ground on any other issue e.g. N.I.M.B.Y's, Campaign for the Protection Rural England activists, traditional conservatives, conventional family farmers, wholefood shop owners, environmentalists, anti-globalisation activists, squatters, butchers, vegans etc

## **Boycotting supermarkets???**

In an ideal world it would be possible to boycott supermarkets and find alternative, more socially just ways of sourcing our food. Unfortunately, until we slow down our busy lives and farmer's markets become as accessible as supermarkets, this is an unrealistic

proposal. It is also a dis-empowering demand and could turn potential allies off your campaign. One way around this is to call for people to remember that they have food choices and that they can shop less at supermarkets and more elsewhere.

## **Directory of local campaigns**

This list of local groups campaigning against supermarkets is not exhaustive. If your group isn't in the list and you would like to be included or want to give us an update on what's going on with your campaign then please contact us at [info\(at\)corporatetwatch.org](mailto:info@corporatetwatch.org)

## **General campaigns**

### **Sheffield - Meersbrook/Heeley Stop the Supermarket campaign**

**tel: 07838 186479 email: [andyjools \(at\) hotmail.com](mailto:andyjools@hotmail.com)**

**<http://www.pedalpushers.org.uk/campaigns/stophesupermarket.htm>**

Local people and traders concerned about a planning application to build a supermarket on the Arnold Laver DIY store site on Chesterfield Road/Little London Road have joined forces to create the Stop the Supermarket campaign. Local concerns include increased pollution, traffic and road safety, parking problems and the potential loss of other local shops. The group has organised public meetings, a petition and letter writing to local councillors, and intends to lobby council and area planning committee meetings at which the application for planning permission is to be discussed.

### **Minehead - DIRECT 'Save Our Town Campaign'**

**Contact: Naomi Griffith email: [saveourtown2005 \(at\) yahoo.co.uk](mailto:saveourtown2005@yahoo.co.uk) website:**

**[www.saveourtownminehead.co.uk](http://www.saveourtownminehead.co.uk)**

West Somerset District council wants to sell one of Minehead's town centre car parks to build a new supermarket (possibly an Asda store) on the edge of the town centre and to build new council offices on another car park, which currently holds the town market. The council argues based on a report, which they commissioned, that Minehead needs more retail space, particularly non-food, to prevent leakage of shoppers to other retail centres. Locals fear that a new supermarket will mean that the high street shops, which include plenty of small independent retailers, will close as they won't be able to compete. Locals got together in January 2005 to start campaigning and have launched a petition, letter writing campaign, held public meetings, developed a website and organised a march of 600 people through the town.

### **Exmouth Citizens Forum (Save our Shoreline)**

**Contact: Tim Todd/Megan Armstrong tel: 07976 833 320**

**email: [info \(at\) exmouthcitizensforum.info](mailto:info@exmouthcitizensforum.info)**

**website: [www.exmouthcitizensforum.info](http://www.exmouthcitizensforum.info)**

'Exmouth Citizens Forum' is a protest group formed by a number of concerned Exmouth residents, and friends of Exmouth, to fight the proposals of East Devon District Council (EDDC) sell off public land on the Exe estuary for supermarket development (possibly an Asda store). This development will include the demolition of a leisure centre and swimming pool and the building of a supermarket in their place on the estuary. The group is concerned about the impact of another supermarket on the viability of the town centre and the environmental impact of more development on the estuary. The group wants the regeneration of Exmouth to be a community-driven bottom-up process, not something imposed by the council. The group has organised a petition and demonstrations against the proposed development, produces an newsletter and has a website.

In July 2005, the petition signed by 10,970 Exmouthians was presented in parliament by the local MP.

## **Shirley, West Midlands 'Keep Shirley Alive' Campaign**

Email Karen Leach [karen \(at\) localisewestmidlands.org.uk](mailto:karen(at)localisewestmidlands.org.uk)

[www.localisewestmidlands.org.uk/New\\_Heart\\_of\\_Shirley.rtf](http://www.localisewestmidlands.org.uk/New_Heart_of_Shirley.rtf)

Local campaign group, 'Keep Shirley Alive' are fighting proposals for a 42,000 sq foot superstore, underground car park and 15-20 retail units for big name stores, in the heart of Shirley town centre. The group has called on Solihull Council to go back to the drawing board and scrap its 'Heart of Shirley' plans. The campaign group recently commissioned a very useful report on the Council's plans for the superstore development from the independent think-tank, Localise West Midlands (see above for the weblink). The report says that the 1996 retail assessments, on which the plans are based, are completely out-of-date and a new study should be conducted. It also concluded that a mix of retailers was desirable in any new development in Shirley. The report's authors thought the overall impact of the proposed development would be negative and the proposed super-store was far too big for Shirley. It also said the council's consultation process had been seriously flawed and recommended the proposals be put on hold.

## **ASDA/WAL-MART**

### **Ossory Road Campaign - Dis-Asda on the Old Kent Road**

[creative\\_resistance\\_london\(at\)hotmail.com](mailto:creative_resistance_london(at)hotmail.com)

[www.ossoryroad.ownsthis.com/website/campaign/](http://www.ossoryroad.ownsthis.com/website/campaign/)

Asda bought and planned to build a superstore on the Old Kent Road, Southwark, South London between Ossory Road and Malt Street with over 500 car parking spaces. The Old Kent Road already had Tesco, Aldi, Lidl, McDonalds, PC World, B&Q, Halfords and Toys R Us, but what the 100,000 people who live within a one square mile radius of this site do not have were decent community facilities. Local campaigners decided to resist Asda's attempts to move in, by squatting the supermarket site in September 2002. The occupants then opened the buildings and yard on Ossory Road to the public and began hosting community events, children's weekends, discussion groups, banner and puppet making, workshops on alternative technology, gardening projects, and brilliant parties etc

The occupants successfully resisted evictions in March and July 2003, the water and electricity were subsequently cut off and living conditions became very difficult. The occupiers were evicted a number of times, with the buildings boarded up and damaged by bailiffs but each time were re-squatted. Plans for a final eviction/demolition were foiled by the occupiers and their supporters on 19th January 2004 when bailiffs arrived to find barricades and a group of protesters who refused them entry. Asda placed permanent security outside the building and the bailiffs eventually evicted the building later that month. The Asda store finally opened in December 2004. See the website for pictures of the community centre's activities and the subsequent evictions.

## **London Borough of Newham 'Friends of Queens Market'**

**Contact: Pauline Rowe 07903 374 009**

**email:** [friendsofqueensmarket \(at\) yahoo.co.uk](mailto:friendsofqueensmarket(at)yahoo.co.uk)

Queens Market is a hundred-year-old bustling market in East London, next to Upton Park on the District Line, consisting of some sixty small shops and eighty stalls, established by act of Parliament a century ago, serving the local low-income and multi-ethnic communities with a very wide range of low price goods. The London Borough of Newham plans to sell Queens Market, to private developers. After spending nearly a million pounds on regeneration in 1998, the site was put up for sale without public consultation in 2003. The Friends of Queens Market are a mix of local people and market traders who want to keep the market in existence and keep it in public ownership.

The Friends believe that Newham Council is committed to attracting higher-income residents to

the borough at the expense of existing local residents who benefit hugely from the low-cost fresh food and household items that are essential to the health and well-being of the community. Much of the fresh fruit and vegetables from the market are half or two thirds cheaper than the equivalent from Asda.

Newham Council has consistently refused to release any documents relating to the proposed sale of the site or the original feasibility study conducted in 2000. Even back-bench councillors have been refused access to the study. Local people first learned of the proposed sale by accident when an advert appeared in the Estates Gazette (Feb 2003) - there was no public consultation. By mid 2004, despite a 2,000 strong petition and numerous protests and much public disquiet, the local paper broke the news that the supermarket chain Asda was negotiating with the council to build on the market site. Before a scheduled public meeting could take place the Mayor appointed St Modwens as the 'preferred development partner' for the market in September 2004. He rushed this through as an emergency decision, using General Exception Notice procedure. The reasons given for the rush were 'public interest' and 'market sensitivities'. At the end of 2004, the council conducted what is believed to be deeply flawed MORI poll. The Mayor claimed a 51% majority in favour of 'redevelopment'.

Critics of the poll say that interviewees were neither told of the plan to sell the market nor asked if they approved; they were not told that the market area was to be slashed and pushed halfway under a tower block, on the edge of the present site. Whilst 500 'nearby residents' were interviewed, only 214 market shoppers were polled. The Friends of Queens Market already have 7000 signatures petitioning against the market sale!

## **SAINSBURYS**

### **Brighton**

**Contact: Brighton Urban Design and Development (BUDD) & Stop the Store.**

**Ben Messer, Sara Bragg or Keith Taylor, co-ordinators, tel: 01273 324198 /**

**681166 / 291165 respectively: email Ben on [Ben \(at\) clevel.co.uk](mailto:Ben@clevel.co.uk)**

**[www.buddbrighton.org](http://www.buddbrighton.org)**

**<http://www.schnews.org.uk/sotw/sainsburys-brighton.htm>**

BUDD formed in early 1997 to provide a forum for debate on a proposed development of the Brighton station site, focused around a Sainsbury's superstore and car park. BUDD aimed to raise awareness of the implications of the development, to explore community-related development options and to lobby the local planning authority. The Council was persuaded - in part by BUDD's efforts - to refuse the planning application, and after an extended public enquiry in 1998, the decision was upheld by the Secretary of State. The Council then embarked on a public consultation process with a view to drawing up a new Planning Brief for the site (previously there was no such formal document). 500 people attended a Community Planning Event in October 1999, and overwhelmingly opposed any major retail uses (and associated car parking) for the site.

However, it soon became clear that Sainsbury's was intent on putting in a further application and the Council reluctant to continue its opposition organised a Working Group to develop a Planning Brief. The group, with representation heavily skewed to the interests of the landowner, Railtrack and Sainsbury's delivered a Planning Brief that explicitly allowed for a supermarket (only a few metres short of the official definition of 'superstore') on the site. This effectively ruled out any community-related and sustainable development options.

Meanwhile Railtrack, Sainsbury's and other developers formed the 'New England Consortium', and delivered a new application in September 2001 for a mixed-use development including housing, hotels, language schools as well as a supermarket with 200 space car park. The public has continued to express opposition, not least because the proposal does not address longstanding concerns about the effects of the supermarket on smaller local retailers, on traffic and pollution, on the character of the area, or adequately address the need for affordable housing locally. There have been a number of creative

actions around the Brighton site including a squatted information centre.

In 2003, the developers eventually got planning permission for proposals which they spun as a textbook example of 'sustainable urban neighbourhood for the 21st century' with energy supplied by a state-of-the-art combined heat and power plant. Meanwhile it will also include a massive 42 storey building including a posh hotel. Work has already begun.

According to BUDD: *“The Council has now acknowledged that the most controversial and unpopular aspect of this scheme, the supermarket and car park, has only been included in the Planning Brief to provide upfront cash and so help finance the rest of it. This is despite Council advisors’ own reports that indicate: a) that another form of development, such as a housing-led scheme, would be viable and b) that there is no quantitative or qualitative need for another supermarket. In other words, the superstore and car park are not there to satisfy social needs, but the wish of the landowners to make maximum profit. This goes against government planning policy guidelines, which state that development should be based on need not on profit<sup>55</sup>.”*

### **Westbury-on-Trym-Westbury Residents Action Group (WRAG).**

**Contact: Denise Barwell tel: 0117 9508012**

**email [denise \(at\) corporacare.co.uk](mailto:denise@corporacare.co.uk).**

WRAG was formed in May 2001 after canvassing local residents and finding overwhelming local opposition to the development of a new Sainsbury's store. Westbury-on-Trym is an urban village currently well served by small local retailers and a small Somerfield. There are at least seven supermarkets within approx. four miles, including a very large Wal-Mart.

Sainsbury's applied for planning permission to demolish three houses and to build a two storey store with a sales area of 15,000 square feet and an extension to an existing car park. The land in question is designated in the Local Plan as 'open space for recreational and leisure purposes'. The land is made up of individually owned allotments, some of which are subject to restrictive covenants. Westbury-on-Trym is a conservation area. There is a church dating to the Saxon period on the fringe of the proposed development, and the oldest inhabited house in Bristol is alongside the site. This is also an interdenominational house of prayer and meditation.

WRAG was successful in seeing off the Sainsbury threat with an unprecedented 1000+ letters sent to the planners. Ultimately, it was the historic nature of the site and concerns about the traffic implications that convinced the planners.

### **TESCO**

#### **Castle Douglas, Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland**

**Contact: 'Save our Stewartry Shops' (SoS) Alistair Livingston 01556 504937 (or messages on 01556 502487) [AlistairLiv\(at\)aol.com](mailto:AlistairLiv@aol.com)**

**<http://tescodeconstruct.blogspot.com/>**

Castle Douglas is a small market town (pop. 3,386) in rural South West Scotland. Five years ago, Castle Douglas became a 'Food Town' a marketing concept set up to celebrate and reaffirm the fact that Castle Douglas has a vibrant local economy with around 80 independent shops, providing a wide range of products including many food shops selling local produce, including some with their own farms and fishing boats. It also has a large Co-op. Castle Douglas is the main driver of the local rural economy. Despite their Georgian shop fronts,

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<sup>55</sup> Brighton Urban Design and Development newsletter: [www.buddbrighton.org/](http://www.buddbrighton.org/)

these are not old-fashioned businesses, with new businesses opening up all the time – there is only one vacant shop on the high street.

In Spring 2004, local residents found out that Tesco was submitting a planning application for a 2700 sq. metre supermarkets and a 200 space car park, on an ideal 'edge of town' site on the main road leading into the town. The high street is 300m and a roundabout away. In May 2005, after a concerted campaign, Tesco won planning permission, with local councillors arguing that the supermarket will modernise the economy and bring back money currently spent by local people at the Tesco in Dumfries 18 miles away. Despite Tesco's claim to bring jobs to the area, locals say that the area does not suffer from long term unemployment and the supermarket is more likely to loose jobs than create them. Tesco will especially impact on the small towns around Castle Douglas. The post office in nearby Haugh of Ur is already closing as its owners say they have seen what has happened to small shops elsewhere as a result of a supermarket moving in.

The campaign is ongoing. The decision to allow Tesco planning permission is likely to mean that planning permission will be granted for the garden centre (currently on the Tesco site) and the cattle market to move out-of-town – totally transforming this small rural market town.

**South Molton – Residents Against Tesco's Supermarkets (RATS)  
Contact: Diana Amory, Meethe Barton South Molton, Devon, EX36 4JA**

Locals are campaigning against North Devon District Council's proposals to allow the development of a town centre site for a new supermarket. The Council considered a number of different sites but eventually decided on a site owned by Tesco adjacent to the town centre car park and pannier market. Tesco has not yet put in a planning application and says it won't go ahead until the Council sells a strip of land next to the site to Tesco and they want control/ownership of the town car park as well. Locals say that they weren't consulted properly about the proposals to build there and are calling for a referendum on whether a supermarket should be built in the town. The group is concerned about the impact of a supermarket on the viability of the market and the existing shops in the town centre. They are also concerned that the supermarket will be adjacent to a number of historic listed buildings and the council failed to consult with English Heritage.

**Hadleigh, Suffolk-Campaign Against Another Supermarket in Hadleigh (CAASH)  
Contact: John Bloomfield, Hadleigh Society tel: 01473 822063  
<http://www.hadleigh.org.uk/tesco>**

The initial Campaign Against Another Supermarket in Hadleigh, (CAASH) was successful in stopping a Tesco superstore on the edge of the centre of Hadleigh, Suffolk. However, in 2004, Tesco reared its ugly head again in Hadleigh.

*First campaign:* The Hadleigh Society and other like-minded bodies teamed up in April 1999 to oppose proposals from two supermarkets to build on the site. In October 1999, local people voted in a referendum following which the Town Council rejected the Tesco application, whilst recommending that an application by Buyright Stores, to extend their existing supermarket, should be approved.

The developers of the Tesco store, appealed and a Public Enquiry took place in October 2000. The weight of evidence filled more than the three weeks allocated, and the conclusion was finally scheduled in March 2001, two years after the proposal was first aired. The Inspector's report recommended that both supermarket proposals be refused. The Secretary of State agreed and turned down both Tesco's appeal and Buyright's application.

The Inspector accepted that the need for a supermarket was proved but rejected the Tesco proposal on the grounds that the building was of an unsuitable design and would not enhance the outstanding conservation area. The Inspector repeated in her report that the proposed building looked as if it had been designed by Pinewood studios! The Inspector also considered that the proposed road junction would create traffic problems and noise pollution. The

Inspector's only significant objection to the Buyright proposal was that the building of a supermarket adjacent to the existing store would create a "one-stop" shopping site from which few people would walk into the High Street. The local shops might therefore suffer.

*Second campaign:* On Christmas Eve 2003, Tesco launched its second attack making a planning application for the same site, although this time proposing two schemes one that would require the sale of the town's allotments and the other requiring the demolition of a house. In both cases a compulsory purchase order would be necessary. This time around Tesco prepared a PR offensive for example, launching a website showing off the scheme and playing up the '**clawback of trade**' argument, claiming that of every £1 spent by residents on household goods, 85p is spent outside the town.

The Hadleigh Society identified a number of technical omissions in the plan; the archaeological assessment, for example, contained errors, and doubts were raised about the flood risk assessment.

Then, in February 2004, Babergh councillors agreed that the site could be used for retail development and a further decision was to be considered as part of the Local Plan Inquiry in the autumn of 2004. The Suffolk Preservation Society requested that Babergh consider other community uses for the site, and the Hadleigh Society collected 1,262 signatures opposing the Tesco development.

In March 2004 Hadleigh Town Council's Planning Committee rejected the latest Tesco plan for the site by a majority of five to one. It was rejected on the grounds of traffic problems, environmental damage, dangers to pedestrians on Bridge Street and the effect of heavy traffic on the historic buildings adjacent to the site. Suffolk Wildlife Trust joined the Suffolk Preservation Society in demanding further investigation of the site. The Trust believes that the site may provide an important wildlife habitat. Tesco, however, continues to lobby for a new store.

#### **Top tips from the Hadleigh Society's campaign include:**

- Prepare carefully - it took CAASH about a year to gather necessary information
- Rather than address the weaknesses in the application, look at what they've left out. Someone with a good, cynical mind is a great asset!
- Use a range of tactics. In Hadleigh, we used real cars to stage the council's projected traffic figures. This caused town centre gridlock - what further proof was needed! Another tactic was to build a model of the development to illustrate the inappropriateness of site and design. In Hadleigh, this included erecting scaffolding to illustrate the height of building.
- Follow the rules to the letter with regard to the Planning Inspector.
- Engage as many of your friends and colleagues in the campaign e.g. use your Christmas Card list to ask your friends to write to the District Council.
- Brief your District Councillors separately from the Council Officers.
- If you get obscure and confusing replies from the developer, expose this at the enquiry. We asked a simple question about relative heights of buildings but received a reply with a confusing explanation. At the enquiry we asked the developers 'expert' to read the letter out. The developer got a real roasting for sending us misleading information.

#### **Unthank Road, Norwich**

**<http://www.fielgarvie.co.uk/sut/>**

In September 2004 Tesco submitted a planning application to Norwich City Council to build a single storey Tesco Express at the former petrol station site on the corner of Unthank Road and Trinity Street, Norwich. Over 100 people attended a public meeting in October 2004 to voice concerns. Over 3500 people signed a petition opposing a Tesco store on the Unthank Road and most of the road's retailers displayed the anti Tesco store poster.

In March 2005, over a hundred supporters of the campaign were at the Planning Committee to see Tesco's application unanimously rejected by councillors after nearly two hours of

discussion.

The debate centred on five main issues: design of the proposed store, limitations of manoeuvre for delivery vehicles; the fact that the new store would not be adding significantly to what is already in the neighbourhood; the risk of increasing accidents in an area where there are already significant number of incidents and, finally, a 'lack of amenity' (Trinity St/Unthank Rd junction is a blind corner, and various other difficulties to do with the site itself).

Tesco's representative said there would be only 2 - 3 lorries per day and that a new Tesco would improve sustainability(!). In response, a local campaigner and two Ward councillors spoke strongly against the proposal. One of the councillor's said she had "more correspondence about this issue than any other in her time as a councillor." The clear majority of this had been against the proposal.

## **Portobello, Edinburgh**

**Contacts Portobello Campaign against the Superstore <http://www.pcats.org.uk/>**

Campaigners successfully blocked an 85.000sq.ft. superstore development in the historic area of Portobello, Edinburgh. Although the end user was never revealed, local campaigners suspected it was an application from Tesco. The application rejection was met with dancing in the streets and an impromptu celidh! A summary of the decision is as follows:

- The development is not in the town centre nor edge of centre but is sufficiently close to be included in an extended town centre;
- The superstore could be accommodated without architecturally compromising the area's character or appearance;
- A superstore could complement Portobello without affecting the existing 'niche' shops. (PCATS disagree that the butcher's, greengrocer's, fishmonger etc. are niche shops);
- There would be little impact on the surrounding residents!;
- The increased traffic from the superstore would not improve the shopping environment;
- It was not clear how the council had arrived at the view that the local roads could cope with the increased traffic, (It's what we've said all along);
- The development is inappropriate in scale and character nor well integrated with Portobello;
- The demands for heavy access by car would create congestion, pollution and parking problems;
- In conclusion, the superstore would have to be successfully integrated with the town centre and not cause significant traffic problems. This proposal does not do that, would be free-standing and would adversely affect the quality of the shopping environment of Portobello.....**I hereby dismiss your client's appeals and refuse to grant outline planning permissions for the developments.... (the magic words!!)**

## **Walsall, West Midlands - Walsall Friends of the Earth**

**Contact: Gerald Kells, 55 Folly House Lane, Walsall, WS1 3EL. Tel: 01922 636601  
email: [gerald.kells@talk21.com](mailto:gerald.kells@talk21.com)**

The Walsall local FOE group campaigned against Tesco's plans to replace their town centre store, which serves people without cars, with a smaller Tesco Metro, and build a big new store on the edge of town. The local FOE group and other opponents of the proposal claimed the new store was 'out of town' but the council argued that it was 'in town', because the site is included in the town plan. The FOE group successfully argued that the store was 'out of town' at the public enquiry, held in September 2001. The group continues to support the maintenance of the town centre and oppose out of town developments. Gerald Kells is an experienced campaigner on supermarket development and planning appeals and is happy to give advice to other campaigners.

### **Witney 'Save the Post Offices Campaign'**

Contact: Richard Dossett-Davies Tel: 01993 705516  
[www.users.waitrose.com/~greenwitney/recent.html](http://www.users.waitrose.com/~greenwitney/recent.html)

Local people in Witney were angry when Tesco took over two local 'One Stop' convenience stores and then said it would close the post offices which had been operating in the shops. The campaign called a public meeting so that local people could voice their views over Tesco's plans to close the Post Offices in Cogges and Fettiplace Road (Smith's Estate). Locals argued the post office closures would leave 10,000 people in Witney without a local post office. Many pensioners depend on the post office to withdraw money, pay utility bills and council tax. It is too far to walk to the main post office for many elderly and disabled people. Local campaigners including pensioners and wheelchair users took their campaign to Tesco's HQ in Hertfordshire and to Tesco's AGM, where they put searching questions to Tesco's CEO.

The fight continued with more demonstrations, but eventually Tesco closed the stores in 2004, amid promises from them and the local council that at least one of the Post Offices would reopen elsewhere, but that promise has been dropped. Campaigners hear that profits at the two Tesco stores have been disappointing.

For more information about nationwide campaigns to try and stop Tesco closing instore post-offices, see [www.everylittlehurts.org.uk](http://www.everylittlehurts.org.uk)

### **Workington, Cumbria**

**Contact: Paul Shepherd or the Save Our Cloffocks campaign**  
**<http://www.cloffocks.cwc.net/MainFrame.htm>**

Asda and Tesco are currently involved in a bidding war for the controversial Laundry Field greenfield site on the Cloffocks that has been ongoing since 2004, when after a £20,000 independent survey said the town could only support two big name retailers and Tesco was chosen. In July 2005, with Tesco just weeks from submitting planning permission, Asda stepped in with another multi-million pound bid.

After a long running campaign by the 'Save Our Cloffocks' group to stop previous developments on the site, which included a failed attempt to have the site declared a public green, a lone campaigner, Paul Shepherd, has launched his own protest against the latest threat by submitting his own planning application for a wildlife haven and adventure playground. He had to pay £265 to submit the application. Even if he is successful, it doesn't mean he can go ahead as the final decision lies with the land owner, Allerdale council. The council says it is planning to use the millions from the sale to develop sports and leisure schemes in the area and have already begun a consultation process. The Cloffocks is the site of an ancient Celtic game called 'Uppies and Downies'. The sale of the land for a supermarket would spell the end of this long standing tradition.

### **Lewisham-Hither Green Heritage,**

**Contact: Douglas Earle, 144 Hither Green Lane, London SE13 6QA.**  
**tel: 0208 244 3778.**

Tesco bought the Hither Green Hospital for £5m, and sought planning permission to redevelop it, although there were already several supermarkets nearby. The campaign against it focused on heritage issues (preserving the old buildings and their setting), traffic, impact on local shops and loss of trees. The application went to appeal in 1999 and was rejected by the Inspector. The main reason for rejection was the negative impact it would have on the local town centre.

## **Llandovery**

**Contact: Mr Davies, 4 Kings Road, Llandovery, Carmarthenshire, SA20 0PU. tel: 01550 720 269.**

In the late 1990's there were plans for a store and petrol station on a green field site at edge of this small market town (2,000 population). Local traders and residents were concerned about the damage it would do to the town centre. The retail impact assessment carried out for Tesco was felt to be highly inaccurate, so Camarthenshire County Council commissioned its own. Currently there is a revised application for a central town location which some retailers feel might encourage more people to shop in the town. An environmental impact assessment (flood prevention scheme) was needed and the retailer had to pay half the cost, approx. £600,000. In June 2001 Tesco withdrew their application because they felt there wasn't sufficient parking in the scheme for the edge of town development.

## **Sheringham Campaign Against Major Retail Over Development (SCAMROD)**

**Contacts: Ronald Wright/Jamie Wright, Ironmongers - 01263 823258**

Billed as one of the last towns without a supermarket, the residents of the market town of Sheringham have been trying to fight off the major superstores for more than seven years. Budgens got planning permission for a smaller store at the end of the high street in 2003. The scale of the proposed out-of-town Tesco store and its impact on the vitality of the town centre are the main concerns, as are increasing traffic problems on the already busy coast road. The campaign group argued that the planned Budgens store was big enough to meet Sheringham's shopping needs. Locals feel let down by the council because the Tesco store was initially refused permission by the area planning committee, but when Tesco threatened to appeal and claim costs from the council if the application was refused, it was subsequently approved by the full council in January 2004. The permission was however subject to twenty conditions. Tesco say some of these are too onerous, the limit on non-food to 15% of the floor area and the ban on a cafe, florist, chemist and wet fish sales in the store, and so they are back before the planning committee again arguing for their removal.

## **Waitrose**

### **Wimborne, Dorset - 'Keep Wimborne Town Green'**

**Contact: Peter Mann [pm3\(at\)speed-mail.co.uk](mailto:pm3(at)speed-mail.co.uk) [www.kwtg.co.uk/](http://www.kwtg.co.uk/)**

Locals in Wimborne are campaigning against the development of a Waitrose store on one of the only green spaces left in town, the cricket pitch. They are not opposed per se to Waitrose being in the area, but to the particular site that has been chosen for the store. The group has a petition and is encouraging people to write letters to councillors and plans to present argument against the proposals to the planning committee.

### **Other campaigns we know about:**

From 'hypermarket rage' in Epsom, Surrey, to a Torrington bookseller declaring war on Tesco. from the shopkeepers of Ravensthorpe, Yorkshire, to a 13,000 signature petition in Dartford, Kent. Ongoing battles against both Tesco and Asda in Bideford, North Devon, to the parish councils of Thorpe-le-Soken, Manningtree and Great Bentley meeting to tackle the 'plague of locusts' that is Tesco. Please contact us if you know of any other campaigns we can include.

## **Useful Contacts**

### **Information about the Planning System**

#### **Friends of the Earth**

FOE has a dedicated planning website which includes a campaigner's guide to

understanding the new local planning system in England.  
[www.foe.co.uk/resource/local/planning/index.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/local/planning/index.html)

### **Office of the Deputy Prime Minister**

The government department responsible for planning. See their website for information on reform of the planning system, environmental impact assessment, planning policy guidance notes, planning policy statements and consultation documents.

26 Whitehall London SW1A 2WH Tel: 020 7944 4400 [www.odpm.gov.uk](http://www.odpm.gov.uk)

### **Planning Inspectorate**

The Planning Inspectorate is the government agency that processes planning and enforcement appeals and holds inquiries into local development plans. It also deals with a wide variety of other planning-related casework, including listed building consent appeals, advertisement appeals and reporting on planning applications

The Planning Inspectorate, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6PN  
Tel:0117 372 8000 Fax: 0117 372 8139 [www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk](http://www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk)

### **Planning Portal**

Run by the Planning Inspectorate, this website gives information about how the planning system works in England and Wales, how to make planning applications and appeals, copies of planning policy guidance (England) and technical advice notes (Wales), local plans for each area and the latest planning news including relevant legal cases.

[www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk)

### **Planning Help**

The CPRE Planning Help website has lots of information which explains the new planning system and how it works as well as information to help stop new developments. They have also produced a number of more detailed guides to the stages of the planning process, including planning applications, planning appeals, departure applications and 'call-ins' and strategic environmental assessment, which can be downloaded from the website. [www.planninghelp.org.uk](http://www.planninghelp.org.uk)

### **The Stationery Office**

Copies of Acts of Parliament including the Town and Country Planning Acts and Planning Policy Guidance notes are available from the stationary office. Either visit the TSO bookshop, 123 Kingsway, London WC2B 6PQ Tel: 020 7242 6393 or 020 7242 6410 Fax: 020 7242 6394 email: [london.bookshop@tso.co.uk](mailto:london.bookshop@tso.co.uk) There are also TSO bookshops in Belfast, Birmingham, Cardiff, Edinburgh and Manchester. Or order publications by tel: 0870 600 5522, fax: 0870 600 5533, email: [customer.services@tso.co.uk](mailto:customer.services@tso.co.uk) or on their website: [www.tso.co.uk](http://www.tso.co.uk)

## **General advice for campaigning against supermarket developments**

### **Cadw**

The historic environment agency within the Welsh Assembly with responsibility for protecting, conserving and promoting an appreciation of the historic environment of Wales. This includes historic buildings, ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, landscapes and underwater archaeology.

Plas Carew, Unit 5/7 Cefn Coed, Parc Nantgarw, Cardiff, CF15 7QQ Tel: 01443 33 6000 email: [Cadw@Wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Cadw@Wales.gsi.gov.uk) website: [www.cadw.wales.gov.uk](http://www.cadw.wales.gov.uk)

### **Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)**

CPRE is a national charity which 'promotes the beauty, tranquillity and diversity of rural England by encouraging the sustainable use of land and other natural resources in town and country'. It campaigns on the environmental and sustainability issues relating to new development.

There are lots of local groups and at any one time several of them are likely to be involved in campaigning against new supermarket developments. Contact CPRE to find out the contact details of your nearest group.

Planning Help is a project of the CPRE which aims to show how the planning system can be used to protect the countryside and promote urban regeneration. They have produced a number of guides to the stages of the planning process, including planning applications, planning appeals, departure applications and 'call-ins', and strategic environmental assessments which can be downloaded from the planning help website

[www.planninghelp.org.uk](http://www.planninghelp.org.uk)

128 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0SW. Tel: 020 7981 2800 Fax: 020 7981 2899.

email: [info\(at\)cpre.org.uk](mailto:info(at)cpre.org.uk) websites: [www.cpre.org.uk](http://www.cpre.org.uk)

### **Corporate Watch**

Publisher of this guide, Corporate Watch is a not-for-profit research organisation working to expose the environmental and social impact of corporations and the structural and systemic causes behind them. . It produces briefings and profiles of corporations, publishes a bi-monthly newsletter and fortnightly email news updates. It also acts as an information service to support, strengthen and initiate grassroots campaigns against corporations. Other publications likely to be of interest to those campaigning against supermarket developments include 'Whats Wrong with Supermarkets?', 'A Rough Guide to the UK Farming Crisis' and profiles of the three largest supermarkets: Tesco, Asda and Sainsbury.

16b Cherwell Street, Oxford, OX4 1BG, UK. Tel: 01865 791391. Email:

[mail\(at\)corporatewatch.org](mailto:mail(at)corporatewatch.org). Website: [www.corporatewatch.org](http://www.corporatewatch.org)

### **Countryside Council for Wales**

The Government's statutory adviser on sustaining natural beauty, wildlife and the opportunity for outdoor enjoyment in Wales.

Maes-y-Ffynnon, Penrhosgarnedd, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2DW Tel: 0845 1306229

website: [www.ccw.gov.uk](http://www.ccw.gov.uk)

### **Council for British Archaeology**

National pressure and campaign group working to promote conservation of the historic environment and all aspects of archaeology and cultural heritage. Will offer advice.

**St Mary's House, Bootham, York, YO30 7BZ. Tel: 01904 671 417**

**email: [Info\(at\)britarch.ac.uk](mailto:Info(at)britarch.ac.uk) website: [www.britarch.ac.uk](http://www.britarch.ac.uk)**

### **The Earth First! Network**

A non-hierarchical network of autonomous groups who use direct action to confront, stop and eventually reverse the forces that are responsible for the destruction of the Earth and its inhabitants. EF! is not a cohesive group or campaign, but a convenient banner, for people who share similar philosophies, to work under. Publishes the Earth First! Action Update, a roundup of direct actions and a contact list of Earth First! local groups. [www.earthfirst.org.uk](http://www.earthfirst.org.uk)

A contact list of local Earth First! groups is also on the Urban 75 website at [www.urban75.com/Links/earth](http://www.urban75.com/Links/earth). Contact your nearest group if your campaign is considering taking direct action.

### **English Heritage (Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission)**

A Government quango which aims to maintain and care for historic sites in England. They can help you to assess the non-planning implications of planning applications eg advising on archaeological and cultural heritage features.

23 Saville Row, London, W1S 2ET. Tel: 0207 973 3000 Fax: 0207 973 3430

[www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

### **English Nature**

The government's conservation advisors, can provide guidance on wildlife law and other

conservation issues, but are very conservative. Publications include a report on Strategic Environmental Assessment methodology and a practitioners guide to the preparation of Strategic Environmental Assessments.

Northminster House, Peterborough, PE1 1UA. Tel: 01733 455101 Fax: 01733 455103  
email: [enquiries\(at\)english-nature.org.uk](mailto:enquiries(at)english-nature.org.uk) [www.english-nature.org.uk](http://www.english-nature.org.uk)

### **Friends of the Earth**

Friends of the Earth (FOE) is one of the UK's largest environmental campaigning groups. Contact them for more information on all aspects of local campaigning including a series of "How to..." guides for campaigners and for details of your local FOE group.

FOE has a dedicated planning advisor Hugh Ellis, email: [hughe\(at\)foe.co.uk](mailto:hughe(at)foe.co.uk) and a planning website which has a campaigner's guide to understanding the new planning system in England <http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/local/planning/index>

Jean Saunders of Swindon Friends of the Earth is an experienced campaigner on planning issues and is happy to talk to other campaigners: Tel: 01793 783 040 email: [foeswindon\(at\)hotmail.com](mailto:foeswindon(at)hotmail.com)

FOE's 'Real Food' campaign focuses extensively on the supermarkets and impact on consumers, farmers, the community and the environment.

26-28 Underwood Street, London, N1 7JQ. Tel: 0207 490 1555 email: [info\(at\)foe.co.uk](mailto:info(at)foe.co.uk)  
website: [www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk)

### **Historic Scotland**

An agency within the Scottish Executive responsible to Scottish Ministers for safeguarding Scotland's built heritage, and promoting its understanding and enjoyment. Can advise on cultural and archeological features.

Longmore House, Salisbury Place, Edinburgh, EH9 1SH Tel: 0131 668 8600  
[www.historic-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk)

### **Open Spaces Society**

Give advice on the protection of common land, open spaces and public rights of way under threat.

25a Bell St, Henley-On-Thames, Oxfordshire RG9 2BA. Tel: 01491 573535 email: [hq\(at\)oss.org.uk](mailto:hq(at)oss.org.uk) website: [www.oss.org.uk](http://www.oss.org.uk)

### **OTDOGS - Opposition to Destruction of Open Green Spaces**

OTDOGS specialises in fighting supermarket applications in sensitive areas. Published a useful guide to fighting supermarket development "Save Green Spaces from Destruction by food giants: a practical guide to local action." John Beasley is happy to give advice over the telephone and in writing. John would also be interested to hear from people who suspect that 'sweeteners' have been offered by supermarkets, eg offers to build new playing fields, roads, sports centres etc. These are often used to make the opening of a new superstore more palatable to local councils and to encourage the granting of planning permission.

c/o John Beasley, 6 Everthorpe Rd, Peckham, London, SE15 4DA. Tel: 0208 693 9412.

### **Rescue: The British Archaeological Trust**

A charity which is committed to the protection, conservation, recording and interpretation of archaeological evidence in order to maintain the position of archaeology as a vital part of our nations cultural life. Provides technical assistance and advice to local people and groups to help preserve and record threatened archaeological sites..

15a Bull Plain, Hertford, Hertfordshire, G14 1DX. Tel: 01992 553377 email: [rescue\(at\)rescue-archaeology.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:rescue(at)rescue-archaeology.freereserve.co.uk) website: [www.rescue-archaeology.freereserve.co.uk](http://www.rescue-archaeology.freereserve.co.uk)

### **Roadblock**

An alliance of groups and individuals campaigning against road-building. They offer support and training for local groups and campaigners through briefings, telephone

advice, training events and conferences. Contact them for advice and information on campaigning, if the proposed development you are fighting involves a road scheme. PO Box 164, Totnes, TQ9 5WX. Tel: 01803 847 649 / 07854 693 067 email: [office\(at\)roadblock.org.uk](mailto:office(at)roadblock.org.uk) website: [www.roadblock.org.uk](http://www.roadblock.org.uk)

### **Scottish Natural Heritage**

Works to secure the conservation and enhancement of Scotland's natural heritage: the wildlife, habitats and landscapes. Advisors to the Scottish Parliament on conservation and development issues.

12 Hope Terrace, Edinburgh EH9 2AS Tel: 0131 447 4784 website: [www.snh.org.uk](http://www.snh.org.uk)

### **Seeds for Change**

Works with activists and campaigners in the UK to help them organise for action and positive social change. Offer free workshops and training for community groups, as well as a series of briefings on practical campaigning skills, working in groups and using computer technology. The briefings are available to download from the website or by post.

For workshops in Scotland, Northern England and North Wales, contact Seeds for Change, 96 Church St, Lancaster, LA1 1TD Tel: 0845 330 7583

[lancaster\(at\)seedsforchange.org.uk](mailto:lancaster(at)seedsforchange.org.uk)

For workshops in the South of England and South Wales, contact Seeds for Change, 16b Cherwell Street, Oxford, OX4 1BG Tel: 0845 458 4776 [oxford\(at\)seedsforchange.org.uk](mailto:oxford(at)seedsforchange.org.uk) website: [www.seedsforchange.org.uk](http://www.seedsforchange.org.uk)

### **Sprawlbusters**

Consultants who help local citizens groups to strategize and to design and implement successful campaigns against superstores and other undesirable large-scale developments.

Al Norman, 21 Grinnell St, Greenfield, MA 01301, USA Tel: 00 (413) 772-6289

(evenings, EST) email: [info\(at\)sprawl-busters.com](mailto:info(at)sprawl-busters.com) website: [www.sprawl-busters.com](http://www.sprawl-busters.com)

### **SUSTAIN: the alliance for better food and farming**

Membership organisation with over 100 member organisations who have an interest in food and farming issues in the UK. It advocates food and agriculture policies and practices that enhance the health and welfare of people and animals, improve the working and living environment, enrich society and culture and promote equity.

[94 White Lion Street, London, N1 9PF](http://94WhiteLionStreet,London,N19PF) Tel: 0207 837 1228 email:

[sustain\(at\)sustainweb.org](mailto:sustain(at)sustainweb.org) website: [www.sustainweb.org](http://www.sustainweb.org)

### **The Wildlife Trusts**

A network of charitable trusts working to conserve local wildlife and wild places. Contact the national office for details of your local Wildlife Trust office. They can offer help and advice on how to protect local wildlife.

The Kiln, Waterside, Mather Road, Newark, NG24 1WT. Tel: 01636 677 711

[www.wildlifetrusts.org](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org)

## **Further information on supermarkets and the alternatives**

### **Banana Link**

Organisation working for sustainable production and trade in bananas. They aim to facilitate fair trade with marginalised banana producers and to encourage importers and retailers to comply with minimum social and environmental standards. Work co-operatively with partners in Latin America, the Caribbean, West Africa and the Philippines and with a network of European and North American organisations. 8a Guildhall Hill, Norwich, Norfolk, NR2 1JG Tel: 01603 765670 email: [info\(at\)bananalink.org.uk](mailto:info(at)bananalink.org.uk) website [www.bananalink.org.uk](http://www.bananalink.org.uk)

### **Fairtrade Foundation**

Organisation responsible for awarding the fairtrade mark to products in the UK. Details of where to get fairtrade products are on the website.

Room 204, 16 Baldwin's Gardens, London EC1N 7RJ Tel: 0207 405 5942 email: mail(at)fairtrade.org.uk website: www.fairtrade.org.uk

### **Foundation for Local Food Initiatives (f3)**

A not for profit organisation which provides consultancy services to the local food sector. Aims to promote and support the growth of healthy local food economies, as a key part of sustainable development. The website acts as an information resource for the local food sector. The FLAIR project - the Food and Local Agriculture Information Resource - is a partnership project led by f3, which is analysing the scale, scope and benefits of the local food sector in the UK, is helping to create a national database of local food initiatives, and enabling the development of a national food links network. The FLAIR project produces a monthly email newsletter, 'Local Food News'.

PO Box 1234, Bristol, BS99 2PG Tel: 0845 458 9525 email [mail\(at\)localfood.org.uk](mailto:mail(at)localfood.org.uk)  
[www.localfood.org.uk](http://www.localfood.org.uk)

### **Grassroots Action on Food and Farming (GAFF)**

GAFF carries out research in collaboration with Corporate Watch and also campaigns to curb the increasing corporate control of agriculture and the food system. It is working to facilitate the creation of new networks and alliances between farmers, farmers' groups, environmentalists and the public both in the UK and globally, to oppose the increasing corporate control of the food system and the demise of the small and family farm. GAFF is a member of the **Breaking the Armlock Alliance** [www.breakingthearmlock.com](http://www.breakingthearmlock.com), which is calling for stricter controls over the major supermarkets, including a mandatory code of conduct with their suppliers and a supermarket watchdog.

16b Cherwell Street, Oxford, OX4 1BG email: info(at)gaff.org.uk website: [www.gaff.org.uk](http://www.gaff.org.uk)

### **New Economics Foundation (NEF)**

NEF is an independent thinktank that aims to improve quality of life by promoting innovative solutions that challenge mainstream thinking on economic, environment and social issues. NEF has produced two research reports on 'Ghost Town Britain' - which examine the huge decline of small traders and services and the death of our town and neighbourhood centres caused by the construction of large out-of-town shopping centres and waves of high street bank branch closures. They have also published a report 'Clone Town Britain' which looks at the replacement of small independent stores by identikit chainstores throughout the country's high streets.

NEF has catalysed the creation of 'local works' - a campaign to support the Local Communities Sustainability Bill, which is now in progress through parliament. The Bill aims to put power back in the hands of local people, to make their own plans for how they want to develop and sustain their communities. The Tools for local economic renewal project provides workshops and resources for local communities to help empower them to take action to revive their local economies. 3 Jonathan Street, London, SE11 5NH Tel: 020 7820 6300 email: info(at)neweconomics.org website: <http://neweconomics.org>

### **Women's Environmental Network**

Campaigns on local food issues. They are currently running a 'Cultivating the Future' campaign, working with a network of ethnic minority women's groups developing organic growing and composting skills.

PO Box 30626 London E1 1TZ Tel: 020 7481 9004 email: [info\(at\)wen.org.uk](mailto:info(at)wen.org.uk)  
[www.wen.org.uk](http://www.wen.org.uk)

### **Planning advice**

Sympathetic planning experts who may be able to advise your campaign:

### **Campaign for Planning Sanity**

Planning Sanity provides free advice to individuals and local communities to help them

tackle adverse planning and development applications that threaten to blight their communities. Also has an extensive website of planning related resources.  
Chris Maile, 97 Spa Crescent, Little Hulton, Gtr Manchester, M38 9TU Tel: 0871 750 3992, email: info(at)planningsanity.co.uk website: [www.planningsanity.co.uk](http://www.planningsanity.co.uk)

### **Chapter 7/ Land Is Ours (TLIO)**

The planning office of The Land Is Ours, Chapter 7, campaigns for a planning system that actively encourages sustainable, low impact and affordable homes. They also provide advice to individuals and community groups trying to gain planning permission for low impact development and those fighting major development proposals such as supermarkets. Call their office on Thursdays for planning advice.

Simon Fairlie, The Potato Store, Flax Drayton Farm, South Petherton, Somerset TA13. Tel: 01460 249204 email: chapter7(at)tlio.demon.co.uk website: [www.tlio.org.uk/chapter7](http://www.tlio.org.uk/chapter7)

### **Paul Disney**

Advice on transport impact assessment, especially PPG6, PPG13.

Lower Heltor Farm, Bridford, Devon, EX6 7EH.

Tel: 01647 440138. Fax: 01647 440047 email: pauldisney(at)btinternet.com

### **Friends of the Earth**

FOE has a dedicated planning advisor, Hugh Ellis, and a planning website which has a campaigner's guide to understanding the new planning system in England

<http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/local/planning/index>

### **Gerald Kells**

Experienced local campaigner has participated in a number of public enquiries against major retail developments, including the building of Asda and Tesco stores in Walsall and the expansion of Merry Hill shopping centre. He can advise individuals and community groups about public enquiries, the planning process and campaign strategy.

55 Folly House Lane, Walsall, WS1 3EL. Tel: 01922 636601 email: gerald.kells(at)talk21.com

### **Michael Parkes**

Self-employed urban planner, who was involved in the planning for real exercise with Gargoyle Wharf Community Action Group, who fought against a supermarket in Wandsworth, London. Forty years experience with regeneration proposals, fighting roads etc. Can give free advice to community groups who can't afford to pay a planner.

315 Trinity Road, Wandsworth, London SW18 3SL. Tel: 0208 874 3342. email: parkes(at)parkes.worldonline.co.uk

### **Planning Aid.**

Planning Aid is a voluntary service offering free, independent and professional advice on town planning matters to community groups and individuals who cannot afford to employ a planning consultant. They have regional offices across Britain, contact the national Planning Aid Unit or see their website to find out the contact details of your nearest planning aid office.

National Planning Aid Unit, Unit 419, The Custard Factory, Gibb Street, Birmingham, B9 4AA. Tel/fax: 0121 693 1201 email: info(at)planningaid.rtpi.org.uk  
website: [www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-advice/pa-paid](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-advice/pa-paid)

To find other planning consultants in your area contact your local planning department or Citizen's Advice Bureau and ask for a list of Chartered Town Planners.

## **Legal advice**

### **Earthrights Solicitors**

A law firm which aims to protect the environment by giving advice on pollution, waste, noise, wildlife/habitat, landrights, rights of way, transport, squatters' rights and planning law to individuals and community groups - where appropriate for free or at low cost.

John Dunkley/Charlie Hopkins, Little Orchard, School Lane, Molehill Green, Takeley,

Essex, CM22 6JP Tel: 07071 225 011 e-mail: [earthrights\(at\)gn.apc.org](mailto:earthrights(at)gn.apc.org) website:  
[www.earthrights.gn.apc.org](http://www.earthrights.gn.apc.org)

### **Environmental Law Foundation (ELF)**

A charity which provides individuals and community groups with information and advice on how the law can help resolve environmental problems in the broad categories of pollution, development and health. ELF provides advice and, if appropriate, referrals to its network of members, who have legal and technical expertise, for a free initial consultation. Members agree to do any further work at reduced fees, legal aid rates, or, in some cases, for free. Suite 309, 16 Baldwins Gardens, Hatton Square, London EC1N 7RJ Tel: 0207 404 1030 email: [info\(at\)elflaw.org](mailto:info(at)elflaw.org) website: [www.elflaw.org](http://www.elflaw.org)

### **Environmental Law Centre**

Provides information and advice to individuals and community groups to help them take legal action where they have suffered adverse health effects from environmental pollution. Dr Kartar Badsha: Hollibury House, PO Box 267, Southport, PR8 1WD Tel: 0870 1657 468 email: [info\(at\)elc.org](mailto:info(at)elc.org) website: [www.elc.org.uk](http://www.elc.org.uk)

## **Resources – Books, leaflets etc**

### **Richard Boden**

**'10 ways to create a better world – don't shop at supermarkets'** leaflet available from Richard Boden c/o Wyecycle, The Greenhouse, Unit 2a Briar Close Industrial Estate, Wye, Kent TN25 5HB Tel: 01233 813298 Fax:01233 813298 email: [info\(at\)wyecycle.org](mailto:info(at)wyecycle.org) Richard was involved in setting up Wye Farmers Market and is happy to offer advice to anyone interested in setting up a farmers market. He is also the instigator of 'National Don't Shop at Supermarkets' Day which takes place annually on 4<sup>th</sup> September.

### **Norman Baker**

#### **How Green is Your Supermarket? (2003)**

The report is based on responses from the 'big nine' supermarket chains to questions from Mr Baker on packaging and waste, sourcing and energy use. Some gems from the report; supermarket lorries travel the equivalent of two return trips to the moon every day, in 21 years the supermarkets have produced enough plastic bags to cover the whole of England.

Published by the Liberal Democrats and available to download at

<http://www.libdems.org.uk/index.cfm/page.homepage/section.home/article.6271>

### **Joanna Blythman**

#### **Shopped: The Shocking Power of British Supermarkets** Fourth Estate 2004

Looks at the enormous power and influence that a small number of big supermarkets have over the food that we eat. As part of her research she worked on the checkout at Asda and she uncovers some unsavoury facts about life on the till, about instore bakeries, supermarket buyers bullying tactics and the impact of the supermarkets on our diets and pockets.

### **Competition Commission**

#### **'Supermarkets: A report of the supply of groceries from multiple stores in the United Kingdom'** Volumes 1-3, 2000

[http://www.competition-commission.org.uk/rep\\_pub/reports/2000/446super.htm#full](http://www.competition-commission.org.uk/rep_pub/reports/2000/446super.htm#full)

This extensive report has a lot of useful information on supermarkets, but in particular see:

Chapter 12: Land and Planning Issues – sections 12.3 Planning Policy for supermarkets; 12.43 Determinations by local authorities; 12.51 Local planning authorities' reasons for refusal; 12.53 Appeals and called in applications.

Chapter 13: Social and Environmental Issues – sections 13.1 Summary and 13.2

Recommendations from the DETR report 1998 'The Impact of Large Foodstores on Market Towns'.

## **Corporate Watch**

### **'What's wrong with Supermarkets?' 2004**

Available from Corporate Watch, £1.00 + 50p postage or download at [http://www.corporatewatch.org/pages/whats\\_wrong\\_suprmkts.htm](http://www.corporatewatch.org/pages/whats_wrong_suprmkts.htm)

### **'A Rough Guide to the UK Farming Crisis' 2004**

Available from Corporate Watch, £2.50/£5.00 + £1.00 postage or download at <http://www.corporatewatch.org.uk/agriculture/farmreport.pdf>

### **Supermarket profiles** including **Tesco, J Sainsbury** and **Asda**

[http://www.corporatewatch.org.uk/profiles/company\\_profiles.htm](http://www.corporatewatch.org.uk/profiles/company_profiles.htm)

Contact Corporate Watch, 16b Cherwell Street, Oxford, OX4 1BG tel: 01865 791 391

email: [mail\(at\)corporatewatch.org](mailto:mail(at)corporatewatch.org) website: [www.corporatewatch.org.uk](http://www.corporatewatch.org.uk)

## **Council for the Protection of Rural England**

They also have a general guide to campaigning 'Getting Organised and Getting Results' which can be downloaded from the CPRE website [www.cpre.org.uk](http://www.cpre.org.uk).

CPRE also produces a number of reports which look at the alternatives to supermarkets:

**Food Webs** (2002) A report on local food networks in East Suffolk, which demonstrates the importance of local shops and services to rural communities. It reveals the complex web of interconnection between local producers and farmers and local shops. Free with A4 SAE or download from CPRE website. **Local Action for Local Foods** (2002) A campaigners guide to promoting local foods including influencing key players such as local retailers, supermarkets and restaurants; the processes involved; sources of information and how to tailor a local action plan. Best used in conjunction with Sustainable Local Foods (below). Cost £3.50 or download from CPRE website. **Sustainable Local Foods** (2001) Campaign briefing which aims to reconnect consumers with farmers and producers. It helps to empower the public to make informed choices about the food they eat and the way it is produced and distributed; to gain recognition of the benefits of a local food economy and encourage more support for local food initiatives. Cost £3.50

Contact CPRE, 128 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0SW Tel: 020 7981 2800 Fax: 020 7981 2899 **Email: [info\(at\)cpre.org.uk](mailto:info(at)cpre.org.uk)** Website: [www.cpre.org.uk](http://www.cpre.org.uk)

## **Ethical Consumer**

**Ethical Consumer Magazine: Buyers' Guide to Supermarkets** Issue 86 Dec 03/Jan04 £3.50 rates the big supermarkets according to their environmental and social impact **Research Supplement: Supermarkets** Issue 86 Dec03/Jan04 £3.00 contains ethical records for the supermarkets covered in the buyers guide, references, company ownership and contact details and background data that could not be fitted into the magazine.

Back issues available from ECRA Publishing Ltd, Freepost, NWW978A, Manchester M15 9EP Tel 0161 226 2929 e-mail: [mail\(at\)ethicalconsumer.org](mailto:mail(at)ethicalconsumer.org) website: [www.ethicalconsumer.org](http://www.ethicalconsumer.org)

## **The Ecologist**

### **Special report 'The Shocking Power of Supermarkets'** September 2004

A series of articles by food writers Joanna Blythman and Felicity Lawrence on the power of the major supermarkets and their impact on the food we eat.

Available from The Ecologist, Unit 18, Chelsea Wharf, 15 Lots Road, London, SW10 0QJ Tel: 0207 351 3578 Fax: 0207 351 3617. Extracts from the report are also on the Ecologist website [www.theecologist.org](http://www.theecologist.org)

## **Felicity Lawrence**

**'Not on the Label: What Really Goes into the Food on Your Plate'** (2004) Penguin. A series of in depth investigations into the production of some of our commonest foods (including bread, coffee, lettuce, apples, chicken and prawns). It exposes how the food industry has caused the deterioration of the British diet, environmental damage and urban blight, and how it starves smallholders in Africa and Asia and exploits illegal labour in Britain.

## Friends of the Earth

**'Why the New PPS6 could damage town centres'** MP briefing (November 2004)

**'The Tesco Takeover: Why market muscle is bad for business'** (June 2005)

[http://www.tescopoly.org/images/stories/the\\_tesco\\_takeover.pdf](http://www.tescopoly.org/images/stories/the_tesco_takeover.pdf)

**A local campaigner's guide to the new local planning system** (January 2005) will help navigate you through this new and very confusing system.

[http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/guides/new\\_english\\_planning\\_system.pdf](http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/guides/new_english_planning_system.pdf).

## George Monbiot

**'Captive State: The Corporate Takeover of Britain'** MacMillan, 2000.

This book looks at how corporations (including the big supermarkets) are now so powerful that they have co-opted, largely willing, governments to do their bidding, at the expense of democracy and environmental protection. Also see George Monbiot's website [www.monbiot.com](http://www.monbiot.com) which contains an archive of his Guardian newspaper opinion pieces on food and farming.

## OTDOGS

**'Save green spaces from destruction by food giants: a practical guide to local action'** (1994). Available from OTDOGS £3.40, post free c/o John Beasley, 6 Everthorpe Road, London, SE15 4DA. Tel: 0208 693 9412.

## New Economics Foundation

**Ghost Town Britain: the threat from economic globalisation to livelihoods, liberty and local economic freedom** (2002) This report shows how, over the past two decades, the construction of large out-of-town shopping centres and waves of high street bank branch closures have driven many people away from town-centre shopping, resulting in the loss of thousands of independent traders. £15.00 or download from the website

**Ghost Town Britain II: Death on the High Street** (2003) An update on their earlier report. £10.00 or download from website

**Clone Town Britain: The loss of local identity on the nation's high streets** (2004) £7.50 or download from website

Contact: New Economics Foundation, 3 Jonathan Street, London, SE11 5NH Tel: 020 7820 6300 email: [info\(at\)neweconomics.org](mailto:info@neweconomics.org) website: [www.neweconomics.org](http://www.neweconomics.org)

**Clone Town Britain: The survey results on the bland state of the nation (2005)**

## Sustain

**'Eating Oil: Food Supply in a Changing Climate'** (2001). Includes lots of statistics on food miles and why local/regional food systems are best. £12.00 + £1.00 post & packing.

**'A Battle in Store: A discussion of the social impact of the major UK supermarkets'** (2000). Download from website.

**'Local Food; Benefits, obstacles and opportunities'** (2002). Download from website.

Contact Sustain, 94 White Lion Street, London, N1 9PF Tel: 0207 837 1228 Fax: 0207 837 1141 email: [sustain\(at\)sustainweb.org](mailto:sustain@sustainweb.org) website: [www.sustainweb.org](http://www.sustainweb.org)

## The Land is Ours

**Beating the Developers: An Activist's Guide to the Planning System** (1999)

A bit out of date now, but some useful tips on fighting planning applications. Download from their website [www.thelandisours.org/pubs/agp2.html](http://www.thelandisours.org/pubs/agp2.html)

## Great websites

[www.everylittlehurts.org.uk/](http://www.everylittlehurts.org.uk/) was set up in response to Tesco's national programme of closing community post offices. It's designed to let people know about the scale of

Tesco's post office closure programme, to let local campaigners that they are not alone in the face of the Tesco juggernaut and to provide a resource for those opposed to Tesco's closure programme.

**www.tescopoly.org** – an alliance of seven national organisations including Banana Link, the GMB and War on Want highlighting Tesco's excessive market share.

**www.breakingthearmlock.com** The 'Breaking the Armlock' alliance of 15 national consumer, development, environment and farming organisations is calling for legislation to curb the power of the supermarkets. The Alliance is currently campaigning for a mandatory Code of Practice for the supermarkets in their dealings with suppliers and an independent and proactive watchdog. The alliance has other more long term demands including a moratorium on Tesco's growth.

**www.supermarkets-sweep-up.com** – a blog keeping an eye on supermarket market behaviour. A great source of news and information including newspaper articles.

**www.keplouisvilleweird.com** "Keep Louisville Weird" is a grassroots public awareness campaign, recently and quietly begun by a small but growing coalition of independent Louisville, Kentucky business owners who are concerned with the spreading homogenization of our hometown.

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