

Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp: A Guide for Campers



Opposing war and violence

Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp(aign) protests against the UK's nuclear weapons at the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston, where the UK's nuclear warheads are designed, tested and built. The warheads for the current Trident system were built at Aldermaston, and are assembled and serviced at nearby AWE Burghfield. AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield are run for the government by two US companies - Lockheed Martin and Jacobs Engineering - and UK management company SERCO. Right now AWE is constructing facilities to test, design and build a new or refurbished warhead for the successor to the Trident system.

Stop the renewal of Trident

AWPC are a crucial part of the opposition to Trident renewal. We research and monitor what is happening on the site. We work with others to organise opposition to the redevelopment of the AWE sites at Aldermaston and Burghfield, including through the local planning process. We make information available to other activists and campaigners, the media, the public and parliament. As well as the monthly Camp, AWPC takes part in and organises nonviolent direct action. In 2010, the UK government signed a treaty, Teutates, with the French government. Teutates commits the two countries to work together for 50 years to develop nuclear research facilities at Aldermaston in the UK and Valduc in France. We will continue to work to disrupt the research.

Nukewatch

If you'd like to help with tracking and spotting the nuclear weapons convoy (especially if you live north of Aldermaston), we work closely with Nukewatch, a campaign against the nuclear warhead convoy. Visit <http://www.nukewatch.org.uk/> for more information.

Eating and sleeping

In the evening we cook veggie/vegan banquets on the fire; we have a stash of plates, pots, pans etc so you only need to bring bedding and a tent. We have some extra sleeping mats and tents but please let us know in advance if you need them. You can either bring food with you or contribute (about £2) to the shopping expedition for the evening meal. Please do not bring meat.



A lawful camp

There has been a Women's Peace Camp at AWE Aldermaston since 1985. Despite the many and varied attempts to stop us we continue to gather and camp one weekend a month to protest on site and campaign against the UK's nuclear weapons. We camp on Ministry of Defence Land: in June 2007 the MoD introduced byelaws which made camping illegal; in February 2009, we challenged the byelaws in the High Court and we won!

See: <http://www.aldermaston.net/awe/570>

Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp[aign]
phone: 07946676761; email: info@aldermaston.net
<http://www.aldermaston.net>

How to get here

By train: to Theale, Mortimer or Aldermaston (from where you can cycle or be collected) By bus: from Reading station; number 143 bus to Tadley.

By bike: cycle from Aldermaston Theale or Mortimer stations.

By car: see map below. Our current campsite is on the A340 on the west side of AWE, south of Aldermaston village and north of Tadley.

Look out for banners on the fence and parked vehicles on the verge by the fence. The nearest post code is RG7 4PW.



Access

The ground can be wet and muddy especially in winter. There is some hard standing on the verge and parking space for campers/vans. The ground is level and the camp area is about 10 metres from the verge. We have foldaway chairs to sit on. If you have a disability and need support or want to find out more, please email or phone to discuss what we can do to make camp accessible for you.

Toilets

There are no toilets (as yet...) but there are public toilets nearby, including with disabled access. With notice we can erect a portable toilet for wheelchair users or for children or if this is something that you need. Please get in touch.

If there is anything else that we can do to help you come to camp please get in touch and discuss it.

Clickety clack
Forward and back
We set our pitch
Don't drop a stitch
We are "Trident Protest Knitters"
A row on a row
Watch it grow
Hers and mine
Secret design
And the builders get the jitters
Together we sit
Happy to knit
Cable and chain
DON'T explain
It's better to keep 'em guessing'
A shoulder gore'
A graft bore
A thumb twist
There's a list
MOD plods may find distressing
Easy to pull
Any old wool
Over their eyes
And take a rise
It's good to be entertaining
What use is a gun
To a figure of fun
Just make a fool
From a ball of wool
And success to knitters campaigning.

Hazel Rennie.



Women only, second weekend of the month
AWPC is a women-only camp. We camp on the second weekend of every month, from Saturday morning (or Friday night) until Sunday afternoon. Some women come for the day, rather than camp.

The second weekend often causes confusion: we count whole weekends so if the first of the month is a Sunday, that weekend doesn't count. We post the years camp dates on our website and we are soon going to publish a calendar.

Children are welcome, including boys under the age of 12 or primary school age, however, please be aware that there is a busy road nearby. Supportive men are welcome to visit during the day. On Saturday afternoon we usually have a meeting to discuss campaigns, plan future activities and camp-related issues. There is no formal agenda and decisions are made by consensus, so we tend to talk about things for quite a long time! Bring your questions and ideas to add to the mix.

Actions and campaigns
Our campaigns range from shareholder actions to convoy spotting and much else in between. Action can take many forms, however we are committed to nonviolent action.

Being at AWE Aldermaston is an action in itself. Camping by the perimeter fence is a visible protest and a witness to the preparations for war crimes being carried out at Aldermaston.

At the camp we monitor developments on the site; make banners to make our messages clear; hold vigils, including "Les Tricoteuses" (knitting while witnessing macabre and sinister happenings); leaflet local residents; we also have parties, events, workshops, nonviolent direct action training days and more...

What you do is up to you; there is no pressure to do anything you don't want to do or to get arrested. A regularly updated legal briefing, is available.