

# Almost all you need to know about Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp(aign)

## An introduction for campers

Aldermaston Women's Peace Campaign is based around a monthly peace camp at Falcon Gate, AWE Aldermaston. We meet on the 2nd weekend each month. The camp/aign is made up of women aged 18-80, and all women are welcome to join us.

### ● CAMPING

The camp is on a wide verge at the side of a busy road next to one of the gates into AWE Aldermaston. There is room for about 20 tents and to park cars, campers and vans. Small children and dogs are welcome, but please bear in mind the camp has an open fire and is next to a busy road. Men are welcome to visit during daylight, but not after dark.

You need to bring a tent, a sleeping bag and mat; in the winter bring extra blankets or a hot-water bottle. We have some extra bedding and spare tents (not brilliant ones); please let us know in advance if you need them. Sometimes there is space in women's tents.

You don't need to bring mugs or cooking things as camp has plates, cups, cutlery, cooking pans and other utensils which are stored between camps. We also have banners and other useful equipment.

Camp is usually set up on a Friday night between 8 and 10 pm by the first women with a car who get there. Cars and help are always needed to help collect kitchen, wood & water.

### ● SAFETY & SECURITY

Camp is reasonably secure in terms of personal safety. Sometimes we get visited by men/boys after the nearby pub shuts, but have been able to repel them fairly effectively. We have had only a small number (2 or 3?) incidents in 12 years in which women were in potential danger or were physically attacked. However, we don't recommend that you go for long walks on your own after dark.

We do sometimes experience verbal abuse — but it is usually pretty pathetic — and we tend to get more local support now than in previous years.

We are aware that we may be under surveillance from the MoD police. This was most apparent during the May 2000 Trident Ploughshares camp, when it was clear that discussions about actions were listened to by the police. Generally we tend to be careful when planning or plotting, but we don't get too paranoid about it. If you have something very secret to say, there are places near camp where we can talk.

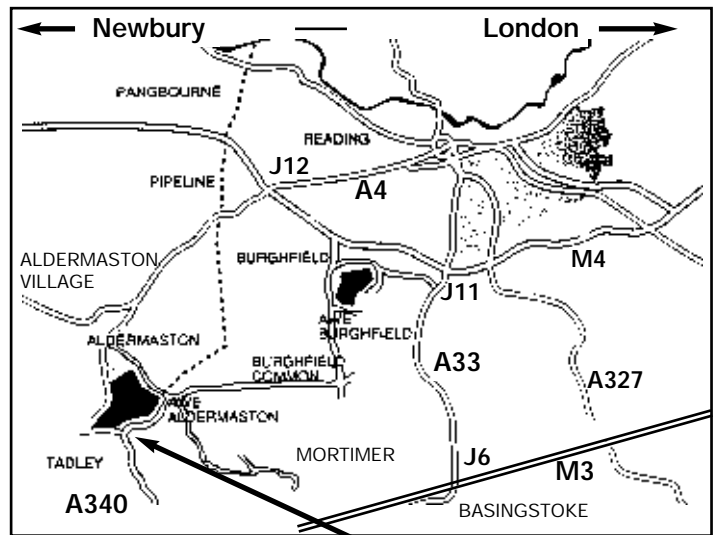
### ● HOW TO GET THERE

By train — to Reading station; number 143 bus to Tadley; directions from stop. Mortimer station — from where we can collect you. By road — from the M4, exit at junction 12, follow signs A4/Newbury, then to Aldermaston on the A340, through village, turn left at roundabout and carry on until you see a garage, Falcon pub and then the camp. The camp is just off the A340.

Ring 07904 450307 for lifts from train stations.

### ● WHAT DO WE DO AT CAMP?

When you get to camp it looks a bit disorganised, and sometimes it's hard to work out or ask what's going on.



Camp is on the corner of the A340, just north of Tadley

The general routine is that we get there on Friday night, set up camp, and then sit around the fire chatting. On Saturday we generally have a long breakfast as women get up at different times, and then we chat some more. Some weekends — if there's something on — we'll start activities before lunch, but many women arrive on Saturday morning so it's not usually that formal. It's a good time, if you've just come, to sit and talk and find out what's going on, or if you prefer — just to listen.

On Saturday afternoon — if no event is planned — we have a meeting to discuss campaigns, plan future activities and discuss camp-related issues. Once a year we have an all-day strategy meeting to evaluate the past year's activities and plan the next. Decisions are made by consensus, which means we tend to talk about things for quite a long time before we feel happy that we all agree, (or at least agree to disagree.)

"Themed" events — large and small — take place about every three months. These include bigger actions or meetings on specific themes like Crossing Paths — where women from other campaigns come to camp for discussions/workshops/to present talks/videos etc. (We use the village hall for some events)

Saturday evening is very social, but also a time for actions (well, any time is a time for actions — see Actions), so you can choose. On Sundays we pack up around lunch time, and give women who need lifts to stations and buses, and then go home!

Sometimes it's difficult to join in if you've come to camp for the first time and don't know anyone. Please don't be afraid to ask any women if there's something you want to know about or feel unsure about.

### ● ACCESS FOR DISABLED WOMEN

Several women who come to camp have a disability/are disabled.

The ground is rough, wet and muddy in winter; there is some hard standing (a wide pavement) next to the road, and space for campers/vans to park. Seating: Foldaway chairs. Toilets: see overleaf.

If you have a disability and need support or want to find out if camp would suit your needs, please email KAZ (kazkazoo@hotmail.com) in advance to discuss what we can do to make camp accessible for you, and to offer you assistance at camp (if needed).

### ● MONEY

AWPC gets a small amount of grant money; the rest we have to fund-raise. Camp funds pay for Aldermaston Update!, leaflets, campaigning materials like our postcard

campaign, special events, web-site space, for women to represent AWPC at meetings or conferences and equipment for camp. Camp funds do not cover food for camp weekends.

### ● FOOD

We cook and eat together for breakfast and evening meal, and sometimes lunch, though this tends to be more haphazard. Meals are vegan and the rest of the food is vegetarian. You can either bring food with you — vegetables, yummy snacks, bread — anything — or contribute (about £2) to the shopping expedition for the evening meal. Someone usually volunteers to cook, and other women volunteer to do the chopping and other tasks. Skipping opportunities exist for anyone interested.

### ● JOBS TO DO

There are always jobs to do to keep the camp going, which include . these include

- \* Washing up
- \* Shopping: there's a Budgen's in Tadley — about 15 minutes walk from camp
- \* Wood: dry fallen wood can be gathered in nearby woods; we also have access to a supply of wood from a local business. If you have a car, someone can come with you and show you the way; if you don't you can help someone who does. If you are coming by car and can bring some good wood for the fire, it's always welcome.
- \* Fetching water: from the public water supply in the public toilets in Tadley village; it is another car-job and volunteers are always needed.
- \* Fetching stuff from our store
- \* Clearing up at the end!

### ● TOILETS

There are no toilets at camp — just ask and we will guide you to a nearby secluded field or woody area. Please bring any paper back to the fire to burn. If you need a real toilet, the nearest 24 hours public toilet is in Tadley (10-15 mins walk). With notice we can erect a toilet suitable for wheelchair users.

### ● SHOPPING

Tadley — the nearest village to camp — has a range of basic shops, banks, take-aways and a swimming pool.

### ● IF IT RAINS

We have a shelter over the fire area which keeps us and the food dry, but bring waterproofs and boots.

### ● MORE INFORMATION

To find out more about AWE Aldermaston & Burghfield, the companies that run them and what goes on inside, there's an information pack available.

Guided tours around both Aldermaston and Burghfield are available (inside and/or outside).

See our web-site: <http://www.gn.apc.org/aldermastonwpc>

### ● ALDERMASTON UPDATE

Update is a quarterly, newsletter covering AWPC campaigns, actions and related information, as well as camp activities. To receive Update ask at camp, e-mail <[awpc@gmx.co.uk](mailto:awpc@gmx.co.uk)>, write to and send £5 (see contact details at the end of this sheet)

**E-mail list:** we also have an e-mail list ; for information e-mail: <[awpc@gmx.co.uk](mailto:awpc@gmx.co.uk)>.

### ● ACTIONS

Aldermaston women take non-violent direct action against the production of nuclear weapons at Aldermaston. This can take many forms, as long as it is nonviolent (There are often discussions about what nonviolence means at camp, so if you're not sure, please ask; the list below should give you some idea of the sort of things we do).

\* Coming to camp — being at AWE Aldermaston, right outside the perimeter fence is part of the nonviolent witnessing of the crimes that are going on inside the factory. Just by being there you are a visible protest and a visible witness.

\* Making and putting up banners/posters — to make our messages clear

\* Vigils at the gate

\* Stalls in Tadley, Reading or elsewhere locally

\* Leafletting the workers as they go to work

\* Blockading or locking the gates — either with ourselves or with the aid of various technologies

\* Special events — this year we dressed as cleaning ladies and symbolically cleaned the area outside the gates claiming we rather than BNFL had been awarded the contract to run Aldermaston; in October we dressed as detectives and photographed the scene of the crime in a Europe-wide Abolition Day action

\* Climbing into AWEs Aldermaston and Burghfield to make a protest, attempt a disarmament action, annoy the MDP (Ministry of Defence Police)

\* Cutting the fence to get in, as above (bolt-cutters not supplied)

What you do is up to you; there is no pressure to do anything you don't want to do or to get arrested. The MoD police believe that the last two of these actions — and blockading — are illegal, and may try to arrest you. If you are interested in this, you can get a full legal briefing, as well as information from women at camp.

Camp women are also involved in

\* Monitoring the nuclear warhead convoys (from Burghfield) and Special Nuclear Materials convoys from Aldermaston

\* Blockading the nuclear warhead convoys and convoys which leave AWE Burghfield

Convoys only occasionally move at weekends, but we can provide you with details of how you can get involved as these convoys travel on motorways up and down England and Scotland.

### ● AWPC & other campaigns

AWPC is an autonomous women-only campaign, with our own programme of campaigns, events and activities. We are not part of CND — though we do receive a small grant from them. However, we do work with other groups and campaigns on issues related to nuclear convoys (Nukewatch), disarmament, low level radiation, environmental pollution (NAG), and the companies which run Aldermaston. We also work with TP2000, who hold their own disarmament camps at Aldermaston; some — but not all — of us are part of the TP2000 affinity group, Aldermaston Women Trash Trident.

If you have questions which have not been answered after reading this info sheet, make sure you talk to someone at camp, get your questions answered, and ask them to include what's missing in the next version.

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