



**SAVE
RADLEY LAKES**

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(Revised 12/03/07)

The Save Radley Lakes protest march: Abingdon to Radley, Saturday 10 March 2007

In an unprecedented show of solidarity and anger, hundreds of people assembled outside the Guildhall in Abingdon to demonstrate their opposition to RWE npower's plan to destroy a much loved local lake by turning it into an ash tip for Didcot Power Station. After demonstrations and speeches, people then embarked on a march from Abingdon to Radley, past the threatened lake, Thrupp Lake.

At the same time, more than forty cyclists assembled in Oxford to cycle to Radley to add their voices to the general chorus of complaint. Cyclists and walkers met up at Thrupp Lake and then proceeded to the Bowyer's Arms at Radley for a poetry/ song writing competition with the Lakes as its theme.

At one point on the march, over 540 people were counted.

Speech making at the Guildhall was preceded by a display by eighteen children from Radley Primary School. They each held up a letter to make slogans like – "Save Radley Lakes", "Save our wildlife", "Switch from npower" and "Take your ash away"..., which they proceeded to shout out with great enthusiasm.

Local MP, Dr Evan Harris spoke first and said that it should be inconceivable that, in this day and age, waste from power stations should be dumped in this way. He said that he would personally be taking steps to try to ensure that power stations recycled their waste ash properly and not simply take, what is to them, the simplest and cheapest option. He wanted the full environmental costs of the various options to be taken into account when making choices.

He was then followed by the Town Mayor, Liberal Democrat town and district Councillor, Peter Green, wearing his chain of office. He told us that he had received some criticism for wearing his chain on a previous protest march about the lakes but said that ' When something is wrong, and this is wrong, people must stand up and be counted to stop it!'

Adrain Arbib, a professional press photographer, recounted his experience at the hands of npower's security guards and the origins and repercussions of npower's injunction. He said that in 20 years of photographing civil rights, he had never seen such a draconian and aggressive piece of legislation as the one that we have here. He warned that the issuing of injunctions and the misuse of the 1997 Protection from Harassment Act greatly threatened our civil liberties in this country.

Andy Boddington of the CPRE said that it was time for npower to give the lake to the local community. (Save Radley Lakes had already offered to organise a community buyout of the lakes, but npower refused).

Dr Basil Crowley, chairman of Save Radley Lakes, warned about toxic elements, which include arsenic and mercury, contained in npower's ash and how, in the past, on numerous occasions, levels of dangerous substances have exceeded permitted discharge limits and have not always been properly monitored. (Speech attached).

At the poetry competition at the Bowyer's Arms, numerous excellent poems, composed by young and old, were read out, or sung. First prize was awarded to two 11 year olds from Fitzharry's School, Abingdon who wrote the following poem entitled 'Radley Lakes', which really says it all.

For a slide show of the march see www.radleyvillage.org.uk/news/news0037.htm

For further information contact: Marjorie White on 01235 216428 or 01235 530174.

Radley Lakes

Radley Lakes were beautiful,
Radley Lakes were great,
Radley Lakes were graceful,
Peaceful and sedate.

Radley Lakes were full of fish,
The trees were strong and green,
Many birds have nested there,
But soon no longer to be seen.

N-powers really let us down,
With toxic waste and ash,
No care for the environment,
But filling their banks with cash.

By Tom McIntyre and Mitch Hastings