

ELEPHANT & CASTLE

'Don't strip us of our precious trees'

Nude campaign to keep greenery on rebuilt Heygate

By John Prendergast

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DEMONSTRATORS DECIDED to flaunt their own 'forests' last week in order to boost a campaign seeking to maintain trees on the Heygate Estate once demolition starts.

The event, co-ordinated by a group called 'Completely Naked on Flashing Bodies', saw around a dozen campaigners strip down to their birthday suits and pose for photos on the dilapidated housing estate.

The 'News' reported last month that a local group called the Elephant Amenities Network (EAN) had valued trees on the estate at £18million.

The EAN stated they were attempting to highlight the value of the 'Heygate Forest' to the area as buildings start to come down around the green spaces.

Pablo Goikoetxea, 34, a photographer who documented the nude demonstration, told the 'News': "We wanted to draw attention to the fact that this urban forest could be cut down to make way for a concrete jungle."

"We did a call out for people to come down and participate in this free and naked demonstration. We like to create spaces where people can find themselves more liberated and we think is very healthy. People loved the experience and I still don't quite understand why nudity is such a negative thing when violence is everywhere."

The estate is usually deserted on most days, although pedestrians still regularly use the walkways as access points to the Walworth Road and New Kent Road.

Those who decided to wander across last week got more than they would normally bargain for on a Saturday afternoon.

However, Mr Goikoetxea stated that while some people enjoyed the delights



that were on show, other felt moved to call the police. He added: "Some people liked what we did and decided to watch the performance. Others loved it so much they decided to undress and participate."

"Some passed by very quickly, and some complained until the police came down. We all had to rush to dress up again, but it was funny as we know we are not breaking the law."

The council has already stated that they intend to retain as much green space as possible during the redevelopment and they are working with their development partners to make sure this happens.

To view more pictures and a video of the Heygate demonstration visit www.completelynaked.co.uk and click the action seven icon on the homepage.

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