

Grassroots Gathering – Joining the Dots

Provisional timetable



Provisional programme for this coming weekend's Grassroots Gathering (with quite a few TBCs because there is just so much going on in movements at the moment!) We can still fit in a couple more workshops – email us at grassrootsgathering2015@gmail.com

The Gathering is free and open to everyone. We do ask people to help out practically (washing up, facilitating, tidying up). In particular if you'd like to run events for children please email us. Similarly if you can offer a bed or need a bed please let us know!

A grassroots gathering is a one-off event run by a local group bringing together people involved in different community campaigns and social movements to learn from each other's experiences, talk about what works and what doesn't, develop networks and make alliances.

Joining the dots - imagines a raising of awareness, a politicisation leading to radical transformation, it may also envision a strategic connection between diverse campaigns and collective actions in order to advance, strengthen, consolidate and collaborate in struggle with unity and purpose.

Friday 17th April

6.00 – Registration / tea and coffee

7.00 – Hilary Wainwright (editor Red Pepper) – short talk and discussion.

7.30 – “Water protest – how’s it going and where’s it going?” **Public meeting** co-organised with Drimnagh, Crumlin and [Bluebell?] local anti-water charges groups

9.00 – **Social** in the Marble Arch, Drimnagh (DJ TBC)

Saturday 18th April

9.30 – **Registration / tea and coffee**

10.00 – **Maura Harrington** (Shell to Sea, TBC) – short talk and discussion

10.45 – 12.15 **Workshops**, including:

Creating radical education projects: practical challenges

Ciara Brehony (co-founder of Another Way and of Wicklow Hedge School)

Órfhlaith Tuohy (educator and educational activist)

This session will look at some of the practical challenges, difficulties experienced and lessons learned in creating radical alternatives to mainstream schooling in Ireland and discuss what can be done to support the development of educational alternatives in Ireland.

Fighting the water charges

Shay L’Estrange (Crumlin Says No to Water Meters and Charges)

Special guest

Culture in movements

Belfast group

1-2 other workshops still being finalised

12.30 – **Assemble for demos**, leaving 1.00 (Bin the Bills demo in Dublin, organised by No Payment Network, starts at 2 pm Garden of Remembrance; alternatively the Crumlin Says No group are organising an event more locally)

6.00 – **Dinner** (vegan / vegetarian, gluten-free)

7.00 – **Unbroken. A short play by Mahasty Eslahy**

A couple of activists campaign for some kind of social change. From time to time they are either satisfied or unsatisfied, but either way they experience that being and working together is key to the social cause.

7.40 – **Events**, including:

Film Screening and Discussion: Yes we can! Seven days in the PAH Barcelona.

This documentary film takes us inside the organizing and solidarity practices of one of Spain's most dynamic and effective social movements, the movement for the right to decent housing. Rather than focus on visible protests, this film reveals the organizing principles, strategies, and practices that fuel this movement, from integrating newcomers, negotiating with and occupying banks, psychological support for members, and rehousing families in buildings owned by Spain's "Bad Bank" - all collectively and explicitly rejecting a clientelist model. The screening will be followed by a discussion open to all. Introduced / facilitated by Cristina Flesher Fominaya.

Activist trauma support

With Holly Loftus and others

Can we defeat austerity in Europe?

Laurence Cox, MA Community Education, Equality and Social Activism

This workshop will be an open space for discussing the possibility of defeating austerity politics across Europe.

1-2 other events still being finalised

Sunday 19th April

10.30 – **Open up / tea and coffee**

11.00 – **Workshops**, including:

Walking tour: the struggle of the St Michael's Estate community

Rita Fagan, community activist

Walking tour of St Michael's Estate (within walking distance of the Bosco) which has been the site of community struggles over housing for many years.

The Impossible Alternative

Members of Workers Solidarity Movement

This Grassroots Gathering workshop will discuss the possibility of an imaginative intervention in political thought and strategy in Ireland. We propose the creation of popular discussion groups centred around what people need and what kind of society they would like to live in. The aim of these 'Impossible Alternative' discussions is to avoid both apathy and electoralism by proposing a positive vision of what our grassroots actions can achieve in the future. The spirit of this proposal is summed up in the slogan: 'our dreams cannot fit inside their ballot boxes'. The details and process at stake need your participation and input.

Activist ABC

For newcomers wondering how to organise protests and events, what works for different tactics / kinds of communication / ways of organising etc. An open space in which no question is too basic to ask or too broad to discuss!

Men's sheds

Richard Taplin, Liberties Men's Shed

1-2 other events TBC

12.30 – **Lunch** (vegan / vegetarian, gluten-free)

1.30 – **Closing discussion**: joining the dots / where to from here?

3.00 – **Close**

Co-organised by the MA in Community Education, Equality and Social Activism (Maynooth)
(<http://ceesa-ma.blogspot.ie>)

Supported by Gluaiseacht for Global Justice (www.gluaiseacht.ie) and **Workers Solidarity Movement** (www.wsm.ie)

Thanks to the St John Bosco Youth Centre, Drimnagh (www.thebosco.ie)