



# Picture News

*Advanced*

15<sup>th</sup> March 2021

What's going on this week?



A group of rebellion protesters in Euston Square Gardens, who built a 100ft (30m) tunnel under the gardens to protest against the HS2 high-speed railway line, have all now been evicted. They are campaigning against the development, which plans to improve transport links between parts of the north of England and London. The issue the protesters have is that the planned route runs through areas of ancient woodlands and wildlife habitats.

The final activist, known as Bradley, was the last person remaining underground trying to stop the high-speed rail line going ahead after a 31-day-long demonstration. The activist, from the group HS2 Rebellion, is accused of trespassing and disrupting HS2 construction work at Euston Square Gardens by refusing to leave a tunnel under the site between 27<sup>th</sup> January and 26<sup>th</sup> February.

This week's news story: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-56209311](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-56209311)

This week's useful video: <http://bit.ly/3uRV2sT>



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## Main question:

How far should you go to stand up for what you believe in?

### Listen, think, share

- Read through this week's story. Share how much you are aware of HS2 high-speed railway project. The scheme was officially given the go-ahead by Boris Johnson in 2020. It has been considered quite a controversial project. Whilst some believe it will transform transport times and create jobs, critics believe it will ruin large areas of the countryside and impact on wildlife. Overall, do you think it is a good idea to build a high-speed railway to create better links between London and cities in the north of England?
- One of the protesters, Lachlan Sandford, has said the recent protest to raise awareness about the environmental destruction that activists believe the high-speed rail link HS2 will cause would not be a one-off. He highlighted the construction of a second, smaller tunnel at Highbury Corner, also in central London, from where protesters were evicted after a few hours. On the eviction, Lachlan said, *"As you can see from the recent eviction, this tunnel is just a start. There are countless people I know who will do what it takes to stop HS2."* What do you think Lachlan might mean by this? He added, *"People of my age are not being given a choice because the government isn't doing what's needed and that's when I started protesting more. We need to figure out how to get more MPs to back the climate and ecological emergency bill, there's about 100 so far, so get on to your MP, and get them to scrap HS2 as well."* Do you think Lachlan has successfully raised awareness of his cause?
- It is thought that for the protesters, for the days and weeks they were living in the tunnel, life was difficult. The temperature was cold, and the protesters didn't have mobile phone signal. They made sure there was plenty of food and water before they moved into the tunnels, alongside packs of cards and books to read to keep themselves busy. What do you think you might have found hardest about living in a tunnel?
- There was some concern over the protesters' safety. Georgia Gould, leader of Camden council, commented, *"I believe in the right to peaceful protest, and as leader of the council I have expressed my deep reservations about the impact of HS2 to Camden. I support the right of citizens in our borough to make their voices heard, and to take non-violent action to bring attention to causes they are passionate about. However, I am deeply concerned about the risk to the health and lives of these protesters in these tunnels. I would urge everyone still at the site in Euston Square Gardens to leave the tunnel, make themselves safe and ensure that their voices continue to be heard in the national discussion about HS2 and the climate and ecological crisis."* Share your thoughts of Georgia's comments and discuss what you think her intentions are.

### Further questions for discussion

- Make a list of different ways to protest. Which do you think would be the most effective? Explain your reasons.
- Do you think taking illegal action to make your voice heard can ever be justified?