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How did police spy on campaigners at Glastonbury Festival?

Documents have revealed that police spied on campaigners while they were at Glastonbury Festival, but how did they do it?

Rob Evans

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So it has now emerged that the police officers carried out surveillance on political campaigners while they were at the [Glastonbury Festival](#).

This was revealed in documents obtained by Guy Taylor, an activist with the anti-capitalist group [Globalise Resistance](#).

Here we reported how police had recorded that the group had set up a stall at the festival and were selling what police termed "political publications and merchandise of a XLW anti-capitalist nature". XLW is understood to be police short-hand for 'extreme left-wing'.

On one level, the police operation was seen by many critics as risible. Many joked about it on Twitter and elsewhere. Typical was @homakhaleeli who wrote "I love that police spied on activists in Glasto's green fields - did they investigate the awesome power of crystals too?" Here too **is a spoof of what** the police spies could have witnessed in their Glastonbury operation.

On another level, however, others were outraged that the police had believed it necessary and justified to go to such lengths to collect and log information about campaigners. On Twitter, @SandsMarc wrote 'This is madness', @zenscara tweeted 'shady and also inept MET?', @roseofwinter commented 'Remind me why people don't trust the cops anymore?' and @paulkingsnorth wrote 'it seems the job of police is to defend capitalism against its critics. in case u were in any doubt'.

If we are staying on a serious note for the moment, there is an intriguing question here. The police officers had recorded that it was Guy Taylor who gained approval from the festival organisers to run the stall. His home address and mobile phone number were also logged.

But how exactly did the police acquire this information? We are interested to hear any information which might throw more light on this. It is now known that the group, Globalise Resistance, had been infiltrated by an **undercover officer, Simon Wellings**, until **he was rumbled in 2005**. The surveillance occurred at the [Glastonbury Festival](#) in 2009 - did the police sent a

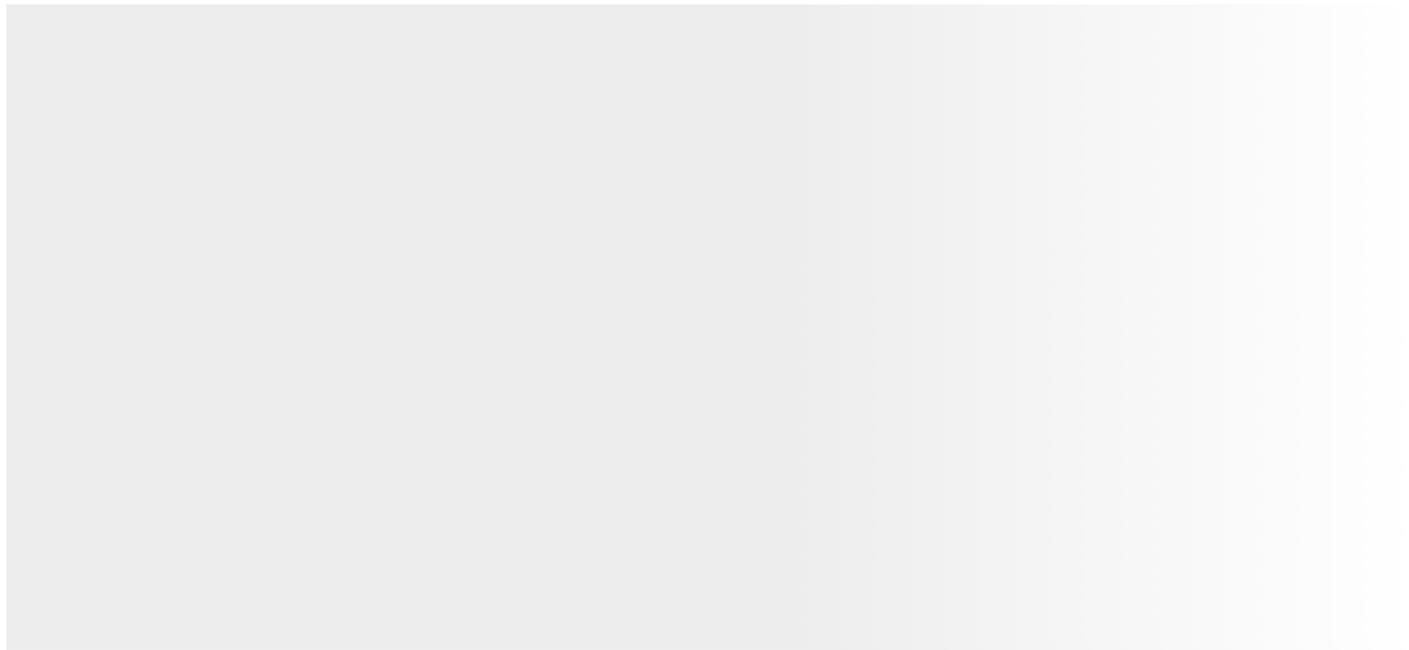
replacement undercover officer into the group and did that spy collect the information? Perhaps it came from an informant within the group? Or maybe the police got it off the festival organisers?

One wonders how extensive the surveillance at the [Glastonbury Festival](#) has been over the years and whether other groups and individuals have been spied on over the years.

The police operation [which has been penetrating political groups for 40 years](#) has been compiling a database of thousands of activists around the country. Taylor is one of them on that database, currently maintained by the National Domestic Extremism Unit (the unit rebranded after the furore over [Mark Kennedy](#), the undercover officer [who infiltrated the environmental movement](#) for seven years).

Not much is known about what is being recorded on this [clandestine database](#), but this week, the public found out just a little bit more about it.

[The Metropolitan police](#), which now runs the unit, said it was not prepared to "discuss individual cases nor the provenance of information held on police databases" and added that collecting and holding information on the database was justified.



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