

UK: Protesters Charged for Symbolic Breach of Secrecy on British Armed Drones

By [Global Research News](#)

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[Drone Warfare](#)

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In April, [around 400 peace campaigners](#) marched from Lincoln to a rally at nearby RAF Waddington, to protest against armed drones being operated from Britain to conduct missions in Afghanistan. The drones were previously operated from a United States Air Force base in Nevada.

The first activists in Britain to be arrested and charged for anti-drones related offences will stand trial in October for damaging a fence during a June protest at RAF Waddington in Lincolnshire, from which unmanned drone aircraft are operated.

The action was timed to coincide with the fifth anniversary of the first UK drone strike and the activists were kept overnight at Lincoln police station after they broke into the RAF base, set up banners and planted a peace garden.

The Waddington Six are (clockwise in the picture):

Henrietta Cullinan, a teacher,

Keith Hebden, an Anglican priest,

Susan Clarkson, a Quaker,

Chris Cole, coordinator of the Drone Campaign Network,

Penny Walker, a campaigner for asylum seekers in Leicester,

and Martin Newell, a Catholic priest.



[A strange post on BBC Lincolnshire](#) saw fit only to indicate the two priests in the pictures – labelled ‘mugshots’ – and gave each person’s home address. It is to be hoped this will not cause them problems.



Pilots based at RAF Waddington began operating Reaper aircraft based in Afghanistan earlier this year. The drones carry laser-guided weapons, including Hellfire missiles and GBU-12 bombs, but the Ministry of Defence states that they are mainly used for surveillance, though a number of precision weapons have been deployed.

[The Fellowship of Reconciliation](#) are urging people to write to their MP about the new inquiry into current and future use of Remotely Piloted Air Systems by the UK military and intelligence communities. The [UK Defence Select Committee](#) will examine six issues, including the ethics and legality of their use. The link shows several other ways in which a contribution to the consultation may be made.

Initial source: the Friend – Caroline Humphries, news@thefriend.org and additional linked material from two BBC websites, the Parliamentary website and the Guardian



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