

Anti-Drone Warfare Trial: “Conspiracy Charges” Dropped. “Waddington Six” Peace Activists Charged with “Criminal Damage”

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Next Monday (7th October) six peace activists will go on trial at Lincoln Magistrates Court following an [anti-drone war protest at RAF Waddington in June 2013](#). The six, Susan Clarkson, Chris Cole, Henrietta Cullinan, Keith Hebden, Martin Newell and Penny Walker, were originally charged with conspiracy and aggravated trespass, but these charges were dropped and replaced with a single charge of criminal damage to the perimeter fence. All six intended to plead ‘not guilty’ arguing that their actions were reasonable in the circumstances.

The trial comes during the [Drones Week of Action](#), which is itself part of the [International Keep Space for Peace Week](#). Many [events are taking place around the country](#) raising awareness of the growing use of armed drones.

By coincidence, 7 October is also the 12th anniversary of the start of the Afghanistan war. While inside RAF Waddington, the six posted details around the base of airstrikes in Afghanistan in which civilians had been killed ([see posters here](#)). Penny Walker states

“With drones, the huge distance between the people making the decision to kill and the people being killed can protect the killers from the reality of their deed. While I was there I wanted to communicate the reality of a drone strike on Afghan families and what it is like for them to live in fear.”

Susan Clarkson, one of the six defendants, also visited Afghanistan in late 2012/early 2013 and met many victims who “bear the scars of constant war” as she says in her one of her [blog posts](#). Susan will undoubtedly speak about her visit to Afghanistan during the trial.



The Waddington Six: (from left) Revd Keith Hebden, Chris Cole, Fr Martin Newell, Penny Walker, Susan Clarkson and Henrietta Cullinan.

Supporters of the Waddington Six will vigil outside the court from 9am on Monday 7th and there will be a pre-trial celebration with speakers, music and poetry on Sunday 6 October between 5pm and 8pm at [Pimento Tea Rooms](#) in Lincoln. For more details please call 07960 811437

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