

Save Vestas Campaign

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For eighteen days, from July 20 to August 7, a group of workers at the Vestas wind turbine factory at Newport, on the Isle of Wight, on the south coast of England, held a sit-in at the plant. The occupation was part of a continuing campaign to prevent the closure of the plant by the Danish-owned company, Vestas Wind Systems, and the loss of about 625 jobs.

The group left the premises, to the cheers of hundreds of supporters, just before bailiffs were due to enforce a court order to remove them. A picket of the factory continues at the time of writing, and a national day of solidarity activities has been called for Sept. 17.

This protest has captured people's imaginations in both the labor and the environmental movements. It brings together a fight to save jobs in a time of recession and rising unemployment, with the demand for wind-generated electricity as a green, renewable energy source, as part of the solution to global warming. Support for the Vestas workers included a rooftop protest at another Vestas factory at Cowes, also on the Isle of Wight. The best chance of keeping the plant open now seems to be to put pressure on the government (which has a stated commitment to developing non-carbon energy), either to nationalize the plant or to find another company to take it over as a going concern.

The tactic of factory occupation, seldom used since the 1970s, has been revived this year, at Visteon (where workers won improved redundancy payments), and then at Vestas. For further information, see the [Save Vestas](#) website, where it is possible to post messages of support and send donations by Paypal. (U.S. and international supporters should be aware that donations are in British pounds, and creditcard companies will charge for currency conversion).

Source: <http://www.usmarxisthumanists.org/articles/save-vestas-campaign/>