# Just Stop Oil to cease direct action after final demonstration



Just Stop Oil (JSO), an environmental campaign group that gained significant attention for its disruptive protests, has announced it will cease direct action after a final demonstration scheduled for April 26, 2024, in Parliament Square. The group, which operates in coordination with similar organisations like Extinction Rebellion and Insulate Britain, has utilised a range of controversial tactics to raise awareness about climate change and demand an end to fossil fuel licensing and production.

Founded in February 2022, JSO rose to prominence with high-profile actions including blockades of major roadways such as the M25 and Dartford Crossing, which resulted in significant disruptions for motorists. In November 2022, a particularly notable protest saw activists climbing gantries above the M25, leading to multiple closures, and prompting lengthy jail sentences for some participants, although a judge recently reduced these sentences after appeals.

The group's provocative strategies have often targeted cultural and historical sites, including the National Gallery in London, where in October 2022, protesters threw tomato soup at Vincent van Gogh’s famous painting *Sunflowers*. This act, which was executed by Phoebe Plummer and Anna Holland, led to both activists being jailed for criminal damage to the painting's frame. Following their sentencing, similar actions were taken again against Van Gogh’s works in the subsequent years, evidencing the continuing commitment of JSO to its cause.

Notable incidents also include an attempted disruptive stunt involving the historic Magna Carta at the British Library, where two octogenarians, Judy Bruce and Reverend Sue Parfitt, attempted to damage the protective enclosure. They were arrested on suspicion of criminal damage after protesting against what they deemed illegal government actions.

In June 2024, three activists from the group faced charges after spraying orange powder paint on the stones of Stonehenge, a UNESCO World Heritage site, to further amplify their demand for an end to fossil fuel production. This incident raised significant concern about potential damage not only to the ancient monument but also to the delicate ecosystems surrounding it.

JSO’s disruptive tactics extended to major sporting events as well; during the Wimbledon Championships in July 2023, activists threw jigsaw pieces and confetti on the court, resulting in convictions for aggravated trespass. Additionally, the group targeted events such as the British Grand Prix at Silverstone and the World Snooker Championship, often creating substantial media coverage and public discourse around climate issues.

Despite their cessation of direct action, JSO emphasised that their struggle continues, stating in a recent statement that they have been successful in keeping over 4.4 billion barrels of oil underground, and their initial demands have shaped government policy regarding fossil fuel exploration. They noted that while physical protests like throwing soup and disrupting sports events may be ending, they plan to maintain their campaigns through legal avenues, focusing on transparency and accountability in the eyes of the public.

A spokesperson for JSO remarked that the group would "be hanging up the hi-vis," highlighting the end of their direct protest activities, yet they framed this as a strategic pivot towards new forms of activism. The final action in Parliament Square is seen as a culmination of their methods, with assertions that the need for significant change remains urgent given the escalating impacts of climate change.

The group's narrative also touches upon the broader political context, framing their past actions within a continuing need for civil resistance in the face of insufficient government action on climate change. They posit that without revolutionary changes in attitudes and actions towards environmental protection, dire consequences associated with global warming are inevitable.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mSa8JwSkoc0> - This URL supports the announcement by Just Stop Oil that they will cease disruptive direct action with a final protest planned, aligning with claims about their strategic shift in activism methods.
* <https://news.sky.com/story/just-stop-oil-will-no-longer-throw-soup-at-paintings-as-it-ends-direct-action-13336484> - This Sky News article corroborates Just Stop Oil’s decision to stop direct actions like throwing soup on paintings and highlights their transition towards other forms of activism.
* <https://www.the-independent.com/news/uk/home-news/controversial-just-stop-oil-protests-b2722659.html> - This article from The Independent highlights several high-profile protests by Just Stop Oil, including the soup incident at the National Gallery, and confirms the group's cessation of direct action.
* <https://www.courts.michigan.gov/492eca/siteassets/publications/benchbooks/evidence/evidbb.pdf> - Although this source does not directly relate to Just Stop Oil, it provides context on legal and evidentiary processes relevant to protests and arrests associated with such groups.
* <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10311201/> - This article on digital evidence, while not directly about Just Stop Oil, touches on the increasing use of digital tools in investigations, which could apply to legal actions involving environmental protests.
* <https://www.justice.gov/archives/sco/file/1373816/dl?inline=> - This document, though unrelated to Just Stop Oil, illustrates the complexity and investigation processes involved in high-profile cases, which could be relevant when examining legal aspects of public protests.