

Mayor of Albox/AUAN President save Expat Widow's Home from Demolition

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Imagine the scene. You are relaxing in your home on a Saturday morning, just after breakfast, pottering about tidying up a few things, when a neighbour calls round to see you. She had been in a local bar the evening before, and had overheard people discussing a demolition order from the courts... and its YOUR house that is to be demolished! What would you do? Who would you turn to for help?

Well, this is exactly what happened to Mrs Ella Dring just a few weeks ago, and she had no idea what to do. Fortunately her kind neighbour had some very good advice for Ella. "Get in touch with Bob Preston, here is his phone number". The Mayor of Albox had also received the demolition order and had already contacted Bob, the President of the AUAN, for help in making contact with Ella. As Ella was not, at that time, a member of the AUAN, Bob didn't have any contact details but, using Google Earth, committee members and other members, he was working to find out where Ella lived. Ella found Bob first, but it was Saturday and there was nothing more to do until Monday. Although terrified about what might be about to happen to her home, Ella was reassured by Bob's promise that he would get her an appointment to see the Mayor on Monday.

True to his word, Bob took Ella to see the Mayor on Monday, who was with a Town Hall legal expert from Almeria. When they looked closely at the demolition order, they realised that the original court order was dated before Ella's house had even been built, and also that the address of the property, due for demolition, changed as they read through the document. Although the court order had been signed by various court officials, and finally a Judge, it became clear that these officials had not noticed the document discrepancies. The Mayor was thus able to send the demolition order back to the court for clarification, and a stay of demolition was affected. Bob Preston said "Although Ella was not a member of the AUAN, the Mayor asked for our help, and we were happy to be in a position to be able to provide it. We have received information about another 8 demolition orders that are 'well advanced', for properties owned by people with Brit names, but we have no knowledge of these people at the AUAN, so we are unable to alert them. The AUAN will demonstrate and protest demolitions for members and non-members alike, but our first duty is to our members, and we do not have the resources to locate non-members when we have only a name".

The final words come from Ella herself. "I cannot tell you how grateful I am to Bob Preston, and the AUAN. Without their help, I have no idea what would have happened. I hope people will realise that what happened to me could also happen to them".