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Конкурс понимания устной речи (Аудирование)

Скрипт аудиозаписи (Варианты № 1-2)

P = Presenter **AT** = Annie Taylor:

P: Messy, long-haired layabouts in dirty, scruffy clothes; rowdy parties that keep the neighbours awake, and crumbling run-down houses and flats that bring down property values in the local area. That, at least, is the traditional image of squatters and the buildings they inhabit. But, according to a recent study, that's all changing. The number of squatters in the UK has risen dramatically in the last ten years, from around 9,500 to almost 15,000 – that's an increase of 60% – and around 10,000 of those are to be found in the London area alone. With me is Annie Taylor from the SRA, the Squatters' Rights Association, the group that carried out the study. Annie, why are so many people squatting?

AT: Several reasons, really. Principally, though, it's a question of necessity. Most people squat simply because they have to. Property prices and rents are currently just too high for many people and there is a serious lack of social housing up and down the country.

P: That's homes provided at low cost by non-profit organizations, right?

AT: That's right. Rented accommodation, mainly. There are over 100,000 families queuing up for this type of housing, so it's absurd – criminal, even – that there are so many empty homes in Britain – 750,000 at the last count. That's three quarters of a million unused flats and houses that are going to waste – in many cases because of property speculation.

P: Hardly surprising, then, that so many people decide to squat?

AT: Indeed.

P: And what type of people are they? How would you describe this new generation of squatters?

AT: Well, for one thing there are more students squatting than before. Erm ... but we're also seeing large numbers of graduates, young people in career jobs, who just cannot afford to get on the property ladder. Erm, and then increasingly, we're offering advice to people who come here from the Continent ... from other European countries.

P: Interesting. And do you find yourself having to speak their languages as a result?

AT: We try. We do our best. But to be honest many of these people have a very good level of English, and all our technical, legal advice is printed out in a number of different languages, anyway. So ... yeah ... that means they're, they're clear on all aspects of squatting in Britain.

P: You mention there the legal aspects – because of course, what surprises many visitors to this country is that squatting here is a civil offence, not a criminal offence.

AT: That's right. You can legally occupy a vacant building as long as there's no sign of a forced entry. In other words, you mustn't break any windows or locks to get inside. And once you're in, then you have to prove you have exclusive access to the property, which basically means changing all the locks.

P: Uh huh? The law is very clear on that, is it?

AT: Yes, it is, but we also tell squatters to put up a copy of Section 6 on the outside of the building – on the doors and windows. Just in case.

P: And what is a Section 6?

AT: It's a document, a legal warning, spelling out clearly to the owner – or even the police – exactly what your rights are. It begins 'Take notice that we live in this property, it is our home and we intend to stay here'.

P: But the landlord can still evict you.

AT: Yes, he can, or she can. But they have to go through the courts and that can take time – usually up to four weeks, sometimes months. Even years, in some cases.

P: My goodness me. Thank you, Annie. Very enlightening.