



[WWW.HIGHCROSSQUARTER.CO.UK](http://WWW.HIGHCROSSQUARTER.CO.UK)

## Press Release

17th July 2007

### Our Small Leicestershire based Wicca & Alternative Faith Group Besieged by Hammerson Plc for Our Domain Names.

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***Big Business Hammerson Plc commences an audacious adventurist claim on domain names of our website.***

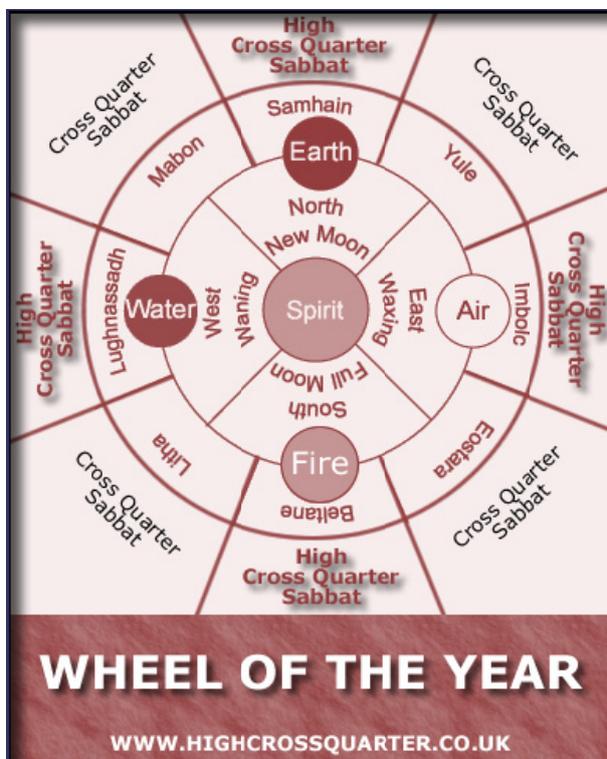
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We are a small local group of mainly wiccans, witches and wizards who use as part of our faith, worship, and way of life the age old Calendar of "High Cross" and "Cross Quarter" days passed down to us from pagan times and before.

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***A website to spread knowledge of the Wiccan Sabbats and dispel prejudice and misunderstanding.***

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Some years ago, we decided to have a website set up for us that would detail, discuss and define the High Cross Quarter Days in particular of but also the Cross Quarter days from a perspective of time both historical and contemporary as well as ritual and wiccan narrative. We wanted to use the web site to inform and enlighten fellow believers and others as well as break through the ignorance and misunderstanding, prejudice and stigma often attached to Wicca, witchcraft and earth oriented belief systems by followers of "mainstream" faiths.

In the winter of 2005 - 2006 and spring of 2006 we put that vision into being by appointing our web site designers and internet consultants to act for us in these matters. In the spring and early summer of 2006 we decided upon the domain names and accordingly we instructed our web designers to acquire them and commence work.

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***Domain names pertaining to our purpose***

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The domain names we chose were obviously those pertaining to our purpose, some of which were at the time were available and some were not.

Highcrossquarter.com and .co.uk and Highcrossquarters.com and .co.uk, were available as were crossquarters.com and .co.uk. Whilst Crossquarter.com and .co.uk were not.

Although the plural crossquarters.com and .co.uk were available we were advised to avoid them as the singular crossquarter was gone.

Within days of us registering these names, our web designers were contacted by Hammerson Plc who explained that they were building a shopping centre using the name "HIGHCROSS QUARTER".

Naturally as wiccans and knowing what we know about the true meaning of the phrase "high cross quarter" and its association with Wicca, witchcraft and sabbats, we were amazed that anyone would name a shopping centre after the high points on the pagan \ Wicca calendar historically so closely associated with witchcraft.

Secondly we were surprised their trade mark attorney had obviously not carried out due diligence and scrutiny of the name as effectively as they might have done and uncovered this fact.

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### ***Hammerson tried to buy our silence***

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Through our Web Designers and IT Consultants we were repeatedly contacted by Hammerson who asked us to sell not only our names but also the right to practice our religion with its online dimension with any mention or disclosure of the true meaning of "High Cross Quarter". *Hammerson were, it appeared effectively trying to apply a gagging order and buy our silence.*

*"Hammerson would also need assurances that your client will not secure or attempt to secure, either by itself or by third parties on its behalf, any domain name registrations incorporating "High Cross Quarter" or any similar name, and further, **will not use "High Cross Quarter" or any similar name for or associated with the promotion of Sabbat or any related activities.**"* (Mark Prescod - Hammerson)

Well as they would not take "**NO**" for an answer we presented them with a price that represented the value of what they were asking for under the terms they were specifying. It was a "No" we believed they would find suitably prohibitive and would finally get the message and leave us in peace.

(They were continually advised by us through our IT Consultant to choose for themselves another name altogether and forget Highcross Quarter as ultimately we did not wish to sell even for the substantial figure we specified. **"However {we} repeat {our} previous advice to you, that you consider another name altogether."**)

From September 6th 2006 until 16th July 2007 we considered and rather hoped that we had heard the last of the matter and were shaping plans, structure and content for our website when we received notice that Hammerson Plc were commencing action through

Nominet and WIPO to try to have our domain names transferred to them on the grounds that our registration was abusive.

They also cite lack of content on our website as an indicator that our site is a "sham" as they alleged. (Even though we had more meaningful content and structure on [our site](#) than they do on [theirs](#).) What they should realise is that we are only a small group. Our web project is for us, a truly massive undertaking for which we simply do not have the capacity that a large organisation has to immediately populate a website with our content. Our subject matter is broad and vast especially if we try to be as inclusive and all encompassing as we now intend to be. We will take a further 24 months to bring all our content together online.

Additionally our schedule for populating the site and creating additional features such as our splash page is a matter of [public record](#) and has been so for quite some time.

They cite their widespread use of the name for their own shopping centre. Yet at the time we were planning our domain registrations of the name, us and almost everyone else outside of Hammerson Plc had never heard of their shopping centre by any name other than the Shires. Their shopping centre was at that time after all, still effectively a hole in the ground.

Their use of the name had nothing to do with our plans to use of it. We are advised that **"their trade mark of this name cannot possibly grant them protection of exclusivity in its use in any way that would exclude or impede us from our online purpose or venture here as clearly there is no possibility of either confusion or misrepresentation"**. Through our website designers and IT Consultant we did our best to advise and to warn Hammerson Plc of the wiccan and witchcraft association\* of the name they were intending to use for their shopping centre but they pressed on with that name regardless.

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### ***Laissez Faire... Tough... we got here first!***

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The simple fact remains that **"We got here first"** and for the advantage of our own purpose and not for the disadvantage of anyone else's. If we... a small Wicca coven composed of in the main of elderly gray haired ladies in our twilight years with all our infirmities and aches, pains and frailties have inadvertently been "faster off the mark" to obtain these domain names than a world class, pin stripe suited multi-national like Hammerson Plc then that quite simply is **"tough!"**. A big business ought to be able to relate to that, get up off the ground, dust itself off and accept it.

In short this claim on the domain name assets of our small private alternative faith group is nothing short of breathtaking adventurism and bullying on the part of big

business. We have been advised that we may clearly here be subject to something called "reverse domain hijacking" where big companies try to seduce the domain names dispute resolution process with glossy "all icing and no cake" submissions. These submissions are often in such circumstances prepared with legal assistance of the highest order but padded out and underpinned with circumstantial evidence of the lowest quality. This is certainly the case with the copy of the submission we received of case Hammerson Plc have submitted against us.

**It is our intention to robustly defend our registration and ownership of these "highcrossquarter" domain names as well as our right to present High Cross Quarter and Cross Quarter Sabbat information online and to use the information in supporting our legitimate Wiccan, Witchcraft and Pagan rite and ritual.**

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***Hammerson Plc should be admonished and reprimanded***

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**Additionally because there are clearly aggravating factors in this case with Hammerson Plc clearly having been informed by us of the long standing meaning of the phrase "High Cross Quarter" in WICCA and then still trying to seize control of our domain names and stop us even using the phrase online to which we have clear entitlement to use, we are to request that Nominet and WIPO recognise this as a bad faith use of their resolution process and publicly admonish and reprimand Hammerson Plc in the severest terms for engaging the process in that way in addition to bullying and laying siege to a small local web project.**

For example... please see...

1) The Grandmother of Time - A Woman's Book of Celebrations, Spells, and Sacred Objects for Every Month of the Year by Zsuzsanna E. Budapest Paperback - Oct 18th, 1989 **Page 199**. Publisher: HarperSanFrancisco; 1st edition (**October 18th, 1989**)  
Language: English ISBN-10: 0062501097 ISBN-13: 978-0062501097

2) <http://www.freewebs.com/13widowedwitch13/> "The four "Greater Sabbats" or "High Holidays" of the Witches' calendar may seem slightly less obvious at first. Essentially, they bisect the quarters we have already discussed, falling at the midpoint of each. For this reason, folklorists refer to them as the "cross-quarter days"."

3) 7th June 2003 Discussion in Google Groups " (rec.radio.shortwave) the witches' sabat of Ostara and ended on the **high cross-quarter** sabat of Beltaine"

Please also see.

1) [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reverse\\_domain\\_name\\_hijacking](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reverse_domain_name_hijacking)

2) [http://domainsmagazine.com/Domains\\_12/Domain\\_1351.shtml](http://domainsmagazine.com/Domains_12/Domain_1351.shtml)