

# FIGHT THE CUTS

# VOTE FOR A SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE

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TUSC steering committee

On Thursday 5 May millions of people get the chance to pass judgement on a year of the Con-Dem government.

Elections are being held for local councils in England (outside London), the Scottish Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales, and the councils and Assembly in Northern Ireland.

In all these elections there will be socialist candidates offering an alternative to the diet of cuts and austerity supported, to one degree or another, by all the establishment parties - the Tories, the Lib Dems, Labour and the nationalists.

Hanging, like the sword of Damocles, over every village, town and city, is the prospect of deeper cuts to essential services and local jobs than seen for decades.

But while the cuts originate in parliament and Whitehall, the government's job in making those cuts is partly eased by the lack of real opposition from Labour and many trade union leaders.

When the government proposed to cut future pension and benefit rates, by changing the way in which they are indexed - Labour abstained. When the government debated widespread cuts in disability, housing and other benefits - Labour abstained. In every council where Labour currently has a majority, as far as I know they have passed on the government's cuts, without a single Labour vote against.

You can't rely on Labour to stand up for you, because at heart they want most of the same cuts, only "slower". They don't disagree with the government's direction of travel, only the speed; forever repeating "too far, too fast". They don't intend to resist the cuts, only to cynically harvest public opposition

on their road to the 2015 general election.

And in recent weeks, Labour's strategists' master plan for that election has emerged in the newspapers, to rebrand Labour as 'Blue Labour', consolidating the party as "small-c Conservative" - as if Labour's record on privatisation, wars, and the widening gap between the rich and the rest wasn't 'blue' enough already!

The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) will be standing 180 candidates in 53 towns and cities in England on 5 May. Our candidates are drawn from the best working class fighters, who will protect local services, including active members of the following trade unions: PCS, Unison, Unite, FBU, RMT, Aslef, CWU, UCU, NUT, and NASUWT.

If elected, TUSC councillors would campaign to stop the cuts being implemented locally by linking up with trade unionists and working class communities and helping to coordinate the fightback.

This election is but part of a longer term anti-cuts battle. The last 12 months have just been year one of a five-year government austerity plan.

26 March showed the strength of feeling among working class people and their families when half a million trade unionists marched through London to protest at the cuts. But protest and rage is not enough; we need a strategy to beat the government.

The TUC needs to support those trade unions starting the fightback, by developing an escalating programme of coordinated national industrial action, beginning with the defence of pensions in June. Alongside that, trade unionists need to develop a serious political alternative to the establishment parties' overlapping agenda of cuts and austerity.

Voting socialist on 5 May, and joining us in the Socialist Party, would be a good start.

• See pages 4 and 5 for the TUSC election platform, candidates and reports.

## Vote for one candidate only

	<b>Vicious Cuts</b> Conservative	
	<b>Progressive Cuts</b> Liberal Democrat	
	<b>Better our Cuts than their Cuts</b> Labour	
	<b>NO CUTS!</b> Trade Unionists and Socialists Against Cuts	

The Socialist sends greetings to all our readers on 1 May, international workers' day.

See inside for May Day greetings