



# STOP THE BEDROOM TAX HANDS OFF OUR HOMES!

**Ronnie Job**  
Swansea

Politicians keep inviting us to feel sorry for them as they have to make tough choices - choices of whose jobs, whose terms and conditions, whose services to cut. That's not a tough choice as far as we're concerned. If you represent working class people you don't make cuts.

People who do face real tough choices are those who live in the 660,000 households affected by the bedroom tax. They face choices like: "Do I try to pay my increased housing costs or put food on the table? Will I face the threat of eviction for being behind in my rent or will my family go hungry?"

A large portion of the victims of the bedroom tax are disabled; 63% of affected households have one or more disabled person. Stephen Palmer of Merthyr is being charged bedroom tax but his 'spare' bedroom isn't empty - it is filled to the brim with his essential kidney dialysis equipment!

At a public meeting, Peter explained that he has an autistic son who, although living in residential care, regularly stays overnight. The nature of his illness means that maintaining a familiar layout to the home and, in particular to his



As the campaign against the bedroom tax grows, there will be more demos like this one in Glasgow  
photo Jim Halfpenny

bedroom is extremely important. Moving out of the family home of 31 years is not an option.

The bedroom tax is supposed to be about maximising the use of existing social housing, by 'encourag-

ing' people to downsize. If you are poor, receive housing benefit and in social housing, you now have no right to be secure in a home filled with family memories and part of a community, surrounded by friends

and neighbours. If the size of your household changes through kids growing up, hospitalisation or even bereavement, you are expected to move or pay a huge penalty.

Even if you don't mind moving,

in many parts of the country finding smaller accommodation is impossible. According to Welsh local authorities, there are just 400 single-bedroom properties in social housing in the whole of Wales and four (out of 22) council areas have no single-bedroom homes available. And there's no help with the substantial costs of moving anyway.

A month into the bedroom tax, thousands of people are finding they can't pay. It is perhaps the single most blatant attack on the poorest in our communities. It has to be fought along with the whole raft of Con-Dem cuts.

See page 5 for more on how to fight the bedroom tax

**TUSC**  
**AGAINST**  
**CUTS**

Election day: 2 May.  
For more details of the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition campaigns, see page 8 and [www.tusc.org.uk](http://www.tusc.org.uk)





# the Socialist

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## South Africa: Workers and Socialist Party First steps toward uniting struggles

**Liv Shange**  
DSM South Africa

Following the launch of the new Workers and Socialist Party (WASP) on 21 March, work is continuing to complete the formal registration of the party and establish its structures across South Africa.

The main focus is now on a campaign for real jobs, real wages and decent working conditions for the hundreds of thousands of workers who are exploited as 'volunteers' in the public sector. This campaign is linked to the struggle for the most basic of public services in working class areas, such as electricity and housing, as well as the mineworkers' demands for a living wage and against shaft closures.

Democratic Socialist Movement (DSM - the Socialist Party's sister organisation in South Africa) and mineworker activists, are building WASP through such protests in, for example, the mining communities outside Johannesburg and in Limpopo.

On May Day (1 May), WASP is holding a rally in Carletonville, the gold mining town south of Johannesburg, aimed at tying all these campaigns to the need for nationalisation, under democratic control by workers and their communities, of the mining industry.

The African National Congress (ANC) government is using the most downtrodden as cheap labour, against a background of mass unemployment, in various ventures such as the Community Work Programme (CWP) and Home Based Care for as little as R500 (£35) a month in some cases.

These workers carry out extremely important work eg street maintenance, adult education, basic health care for the most needy, etc, which should be at the core of the

public sector's responsibilities.

Instead of carrying out these duties the government has reduced its intervention to an unholy mix of 'charity', super-exploitation, enrichment of parasitic labour broking firms and corruption.

Instead of creating real jobs to fulfil the real needs of the communities, in many cases, government departments hand out tenders to profit-driven labour brokers who then supply 'volunteers' to make a contribution' and gain work experience while getting paid a pittance if anything at all.

WASP is working on bringing together the workers of the CWP throughout Gauteng province in a unified workers' committee.

### Mass protests

Meanwhile, working class communities are crying out for the means to meet the bare necessities of life. In Wedela township, a stone's throw away from the gold-mining giants' deep shafts, the ANC-led council has in recent months cut off the electricity to hundreds of people who cannot pay the ever-increasing prices.

This was bound to provoke mass protests; especially as it came only months after the mineworkers' strike movement of last year, and weeks after the united workers' and community struggle against Harmony Gold's lock-out and eviction of 6,000 workers.

The building of WASP is part of the agenda for the mostly young activists who are leading 'Operation Khanyisa' ('Operation Switch On Light') and protest marches.

While the workers and unemployed are forced to search for firewood in the bushes and collect water from streams, contaminated by the mines' spillage, these monopolies are making billion-dollar profits. Still, jobs on the mines are

**Committee for a Workers' International**

**celebrate May Day  
help to build the CWI**

**CWI  
CIT**

**Donate to support the Democratic Socialist Movement, DSM (CWI South Africa)**

Last year's Marikana massacre showed the urgent need for the South African working class to have a new mass party. The DSM played a key role in the miners' struggle, helping to set up independent strike committees and spreading the strike. The DSM initiated the launch of WASP, the Workers' and Socialist Party, to build an independent mass voice for the working class. This is a new opportunity. Socialists can offer the ideas needed to fight back against capitalism and racism, against the dictatorship of big business and for a socialist society, free of oppression and exploitation.

<http://southafrica.socialistworld.net>

The CWI is the socialist international organisation to which the Socialist Party is affiliated. The CWI is organised in 45 countries and works to unite the working class and oppressed peoples against global capitalism and to fight for a socialist world.

in jeopardy. By July, 14,000 mineworkers in Rustenburg could be unemployed if the world's largest platinum producer Anglo Platinum

The DSM is working hard to establish WASP and unite the many workers' and community struggles

has its way and pushes through a 'restructuring' to rescue its profit margins.

If carried through, it could unleash further attacks from other mining companies, eg in gold mining where, like platinum, prices

are also falling.

For the capitalists, these are, however, temporary measures - at the workers' expense. In the longer term, the mining barons are not worried - knowing that they own the world's largest mineral deposits at an estimated value of at least \$2.5 trillion. The real danger for them lies elsewhere, in the likelihood of the renewed flaring up of conflict with the mineworkers.

The ANC government has made its stance clear - nationalisation was overwhelmingly rejected by the latest ANC congress in December, and President Jacob Zuma has declared 'violent protest' the state's first priority when it comes to 'combatting crime'.

Meanwhile, the trade union fed-

eration Cosatu, in alliance with the ANC, is torn by more and more violent factional tensions. The need to build WASP and the independent workers' committees could not be more urgent.

In a race against time, the DSM is working hard to establish WASP and unite the many workers' and community struggles. There is now the beginning of WASP structures in all nine provinces, with openings among several important groups of workers, for example in the municipal and transport sectors.

Hopefully May Day can be the starting point for a nationwide campaign for decent work and pay, housing, electricity and other basic services and for the nationalisation of the mining industry.

## Scottish TUC supports 24-hour general strike against austerity

**Philip Stott**

The Scottish Trade Union Congress (STUC) has passed a motion in support of a one-day general strike in Scotland in response to the savage austerity being carried out by the Con-Dem government.

The debate and vote at the STUC was overwhelmingly in favour of the composite motion which called on the STUC general council to: "Coordinate among affiliates and with the British TUC an industrial action strategy, including a Scotland-wide one-day strike, aligned with any industrial action at a UK level as appropriate."

The naming of the day for a mass coordinated day of strike action is essential to take the fight back to the Con-Dems.

The Public and Commercial Services union (PCS) had put forward a motion outlining this strategy, which was included in the overall wide-ranging composite on the alternative to cuts and austerity.

PCS vice-president John McCl-

nally made a powerful contribution during the debate, describing the austerity programme of the government as "a reversal of wealth and power from the poorest in the pursuit of profit."

John highlighted the fact that 40% of PCS members who will be administering the planned Universal Credit will be recipients of the same benefit themselves, given the poverty pay civil servants live on.

"There is a political consensus among all the major parties, Labour included, in favour of austerity. 30 November 2011 saw the power of our movement in a mass strike on pensions.

"What followed was a shameful and humiliating surrender, which can never happen again. We now need to address the preparations for a one-day general strike."

Unison, Unite, the Fire Brigade Union, the RMT transport union, the GMB and the STUC general council, among others, supported the composite motion.

Bob Crow, RMT general secretary, demanded to know: "What are

we going to do about it? We need to name the day for a 24-hour general strike." He also called for the nationalisation of the banks and the major companies and for the building of a socialist society.

Matt Wrack, general secretary of the FBU pointed out, on the day of Thatcher's funeral, that capitalism has failed working class people: "we need to get rid of capitalism."

### Reverse the cuts

The overall motion also condemned the failure of politicians from "mainstream parties" to oppose the myth that the attacks on jobs, pay, terms and conditions and pensions are an economic necessity.

It went on to demand that a future Labour government reverse the chronic attacks on all areas of working people's lives.

There is no chance of a future Labour government carrying this out. The two Eds, Miliband and Balls, have refused to promise to reverse any of the Con-Dem cuts if Labour is elected. The Socialist Party is cam-

paigned for the building of a new mass working class party, with the trade unions playing a central role.

The motion also included calls for an economic alternative to austerity based on "common ownership, investment in public services and for full employment."

We agree with these demands, but it is necessary to implement thorough-going socialist measures, including nationalisation under democratic working class control of the banks and big industry alongside a massive programme of public investment to rebuild shattered public services.

Janice Godrich, PCS national president, outlined the case for a 24-hour general strike and a political alternative to the parties of cuts at a well-attended fringe meeting of over 40 delegates organised by the Trade Union Coordinating Group. Bob Crow and Matt Wrack also spoke.

**From the website of Socialist Party Scotland -**  
[www.socialistpartyscotland.org.uk](http://www.socialistpartyscotland.org.uk)

### Meeting and exhibition marking 30 years since the election of Liverpool's socialist council

**Saturday 27 April, 10.30am**  
**Adelphi Hotel, Lime Street, Liverpool**

Speakers include: Unite general secretary **Len McCluskey**, PCS president **Janice Godrich**, Socialist Party general secretary **Peter Taaffe**, Liverpool Labour Party president (1980-85) and 'Liverpool 47' surcharged councillor **Tony Mulhearn**, former Labour MP **Tony Benn** and 'Liverpool 47' surcharged councillor **Felicity Dowling**.

The exhibition can be viewed from 9.30am. The exhibition will move to Jack Jones House in Liverpool from 28 April until 14 May.

**Liverpool:**  
**A City That Dared To Fight**  
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020 8988 8789  
[www.socialistbooks.org.uk](http://www.socialistbooks.org.uk)



# Stop Gove hacking our school hols

**Martin Powell-Davies**  
National Union of Teachers NEC

**T**eachers – and many parents – have been shocked by Tory education minister Michael Gove’s announcement that he wants to lengthen the school day and shorten school holidays.

Whatever Gove might pretend, these proposals have nothing to do with improving education. There is no real evidence to show that making students work for longer will improve their learning. Forcing teachers to work even longer hours certainly won’t help to produce high-quality education either.

It’s not just teachers who are exhausted by the intensity of an education system distorted by an obsession with targets and test scores. Many young people are also tired at the end of the school day.

Like all of us, school students need proper breaks to work efficiently. They also need their own free time and holidays to develop their interests and personality outside of school and to spend time with family and friends.

## Work until you drop

Gove tried to portray our school terms as some outdated ‘19th century’ relic, arguing that we need to learn from Hong Kong and Singapore where school holidays are shorter. Gove may end up with more than he bargained for – last year, 90,000 marched against the Hong Kong government’s new national curriculum in a protest against ‘government brainwashing’!

Gove clearly wants the ‘work-until-you-drop’ culture to be drummed into children. With Tory Childcare Minister Elizabeth Truss incredibly now complaining that toddlers “are running around with no sense of purpose” in nurseries, it shows just what kind of regimented and stultifying education system they have in mind.

Teachers are in the immediate firing-line. Even official figures show



Gove has never shied away from being unpopular photo the Socialist

that the average teachers’ working week is already over 50 hours. The TUC estimates that this equates to £7 billion of unpaid overtime every year.

Teachers have every reason to be angry but parents must also support teaching unions to oppose these attacks. Gove just wants to turn schools into a joyless child-minding service to assist employers to force all of us – teachers and parents alike – to work even longer hours.

## Family-friendly?

Far from being ‘family-friendly’ as Gove claims, this government is breaking up relationships and damaging children’s lives by its attacks on benefits, jobs and conditions.

If the Tories were serious about supporting working parents, why won’t they reverse the cuts that have already axed so many youth services and holiday play-schemes as well as the planned freeze on working family tax credits?

Education shouldn’t just be about

child-minding. However, the fact that so many employers rely on schools looking after their workers’ children gives teachers enormous potential power.

It means that when teachers go on strike, it isn’t just schools that have to close; many other workplaces are affected as well. Now teachers have to use that power not just to defend their own pay and conditions but to defend education as a whole.

Claire Laker-Mansfield, national organiser of Socialist Students, said: “The government wants schools that teach students to be compliant – schools that stifle imagination rather than foster it. They want schools that leave pupils well prepared. But not well prepared to learn, grow and develop throughout their lives. Well prepared to accept the drudgery of low-paid, insecure jobs that are all young people are currently offered.”

# Times Rich List Super-rich get richer...again

The Sunday Times Rich List is always a sickening read. A who’s-who of Britain and Ireland’s biggest exploiters, heirs and speculators – scroungers of the worst kind.

This year these fat cats’ combined wealth amounts to almost £450 billion. That’s an increase of more than £35 billion from last year, and is nearly ten times the joint fortune of those who made the first list in 1989.

Topping this year’s list is Russian iron ore tycoon Alisher Usmanov with £13.3 billion. His wealth alone would be enough to cover the extra £10 billion welfare cuts that George Osborne announced at the end of 2012, the £2.5 billion cuts he announced in his March budget and the ‘savings’ expected from the bedroom tax.

Other high fliers include the Duke

of Westminster with £7.8 billion made from property, Virgin’s Richard Branson with £3.5 billion and tax avoiding retail boss Philip Green and his wife with £3.8 billion.

So the rich get richer again. Surely then, this wealth must have ‘trickled down’. What’s good for them is good for the economy and so good for the rest of us. Or not.

## Unemployment

Unemployment in the UK increased by 70,000 in the three months to February. A big factor behind the rise was that those previously ‘economically inactive’ (mainly stay-at-home mothers) have been forced to look for work because of cuts to welfare. The number of young people

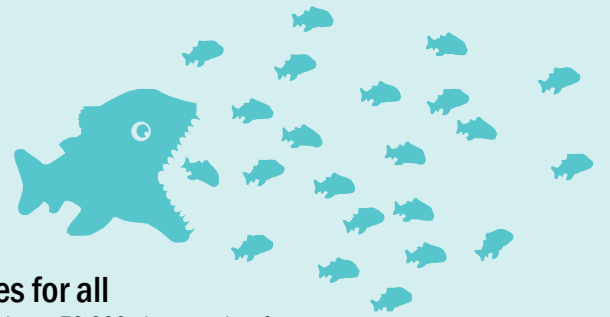
out of work rose by 20,000.

At the same time average wages were up just 0.8% in comparison to prices rising by 3.3% – meaning most people can afford less with their income, an effective pay cut.

Even the usually austerity-loving International Monetary Fund recently had to point out to the Con-Dems that ‘Plan A’ isn’t working. Enriching the super-rich by helping them drive down wages and conditions and avoid tax isn’t leading to growth of us because they’re not even investing it – £850 billion is sitting idle in the UK accounts of big business.

The Socialist Party calls for an immediate one-off 50% levy on this hoarded cash. We say take the wealth off the 1% and use it for jobs, homes and services for the 99%.

# Them...



## Homes for all

For all those 70,000-plus people affected by the bedroom tax in London, who the Con-Dems suggest might move into the private sector, look no further than a lovely new property just come on to the market, close to all the amenities in the heart of the city. 18 Carlton House Terrace is right by Trafalgar Square. In fact, all 70,000 could probably fit in it together, as it’s bigger than a football pitch. It’s a bit pricey though, as it’s the most expensive property ever to be sold in Britain, going for £250 million – 1,537 times more expensive than the average house sold last month in the UK. It’s a toss-up really, between that and the newly-converted Knightsbridge church – now with platinum-plated cinema, gold-plated pool, juice bar, spa and gym. That’s a good bet if you’re feeling short, as it can be snapped up for a mere £50 million. And they say there’s a housing crisis!

Paula Mitchell

## Cuts make us sick

Austerity is not only bad for people’s jobs and living standards but is also having a detrimental effect on the general health of affected countries. The Lancet (medical journal) says suicides in Europe have rocketed since the financial meltdown of 2008, with an extra 1,000 deaths in England alone by 2010.

Deteriorating mental health and heart attacks are also known to increase during periods of recession. During the mass privatisation of industry in Russia in the 1990s death rates doubled as a result of unemployment and heavy drinking.

According to New Scientist, increased stress causes changes in body cells that stoke inflammation leading to an increased risk of heart attacks, depression and cancer. Our conclusion? Stay healthy, change society!

Simon Carter

## Cuts consensus?

Oh dear, it really isn’t looking good for Osborne’s austerity aficionados, is it? First the IMF, long-time proponent of

cuts, indicates its enthusiasm is cooling. Then Sir Merrick Cockell, leader of Kensington and Chelsea Tory council warned the PM against “turning off the tap” on town hall funding. In fact he’s quitting his post. Shame the Con-Dems don’t follow suit. Maybe a 24-hour general strike might just give them the hint?

Emma Smith

## Stop and search

New research carried out by the Guardian to mark the 20th anniversary of the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence has shown that stop and searches of black people doubled over the decade from 1999. The increase for Asian people was similar while there was only a marginal increase in stop and searches of white people. If rates for white people had risen at the same rate as for black people, there would have been 40 million extra stop and searches in that ten-year period.

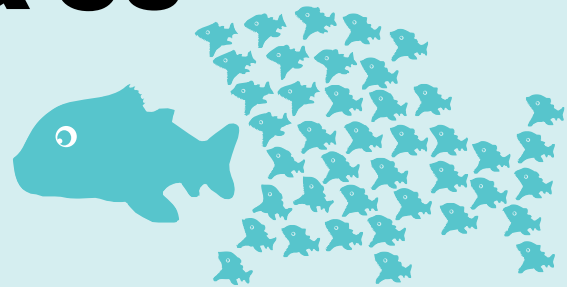
## Pension pots

Capitalism, we are told, is the best way of organising things because it rewards hard work and punishes inefficiency. Barclay’s investment bank chief, the appropriately named Rich Ricci, will be retiring with a pension plan worth millions, despite being one of the architects of that bank’s near collapse in 2008. Inefficiency seems to pay pretty well for those at the top, especially when working people pick up the bill!

In October last year lifetime Peer in the House of Lords, Michael Bichard, floated the idea that retired people on state pensions be asked to work to contribute towards their benefits. Bichard was concerned pensioners who had spent a lifetime working may become a burden on the state coffers. He himself is a retired senior civil servant. The average pension of a permanent secretary in 2008 was calculated to be £849,570. Strangely, Bichard has had very little to say about the burden of pension payments to senior civil servants.

Neil Cafferky

# ...& Us



Have you got news for the ‘fishes’? Email: editors@socialistparty.org.uk

## What we heard

From the Times – hardly “too far too fast”! “Margaret Hodge, the Labour chair of the public accounts committee, insists that tweaking budgets will not be enough: ‘If you really want to cut spending considerably, which I accept we have to, you need a radical transformation, not just clipping away at the edges.’”



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# Unite - build a fighting union

**Kevin Parslow**

Unite London and Eastern regional committee, personal capacity

The victory of Len McCluskey in the Unite general secretary election with 64.4% of the vote against fellow left-winger Jerry Hicks will be seen by the union's membership as ratifying the general direction of Unite since Len first took the position in 2011.

Based on his record, in particular of backing strikes, the Socialist Party gave Len critical support.

The fact that no right-wing candidate stood in this election shows that, under the coalition government's austerity programme and the attacks of big business, members have no enthusiasm for policies or a union that do not challenge the Con-Dems and their rich friends.

The almost 80,000 votes received for Jerry do not run counter to this and reflect the suspicion of many of his supporters that the Unite leadership may not move further in a militant direction.

That does not mean that the right have been permanently defeated in Unite. The trade union movement is littered with examples of 'left' leaderships that have failed to adequately fight for their members and have

paid by handing unions to the right. With most of the issues following its formation now settled, Unite will have two major challenges that will decide its future direction.

In battling this government, will it link with other fighting unions such as PCS and RMT to force general strike action? Unite's submission to the TUC general council on the 'Resolution 5' consultation was positive in being 'in favour' of a general strike and willing to explore avenues for calling one.

But it explicitly avoids the question of naming a date, while also ruling out as too difficult coordinated 'industrial' action as opposed to 'political' action. Yet wasn't the public sector pension strike an 'industrial' issue?

Unite must not close off pathways to the action that is necessary to defeat this "government of millionaires", which could be fatally wounded by a general strike movement. In fact, Unite could play a pivotal role by calling meetings of executives of left unions and rank-and-file reps throughout the trade unions with the aim of discussing and calling action.

The other major issue is Unite's political stance. Unite and its predecessors have been loyal to Labour

Party leaders but have failed, alongside other unions, to wield their influence to reverse the party's pro-business policies.

The union's strategy is for transforming New Labour by actively encouraging Unite members to join and change local parties while fighting for union candidates to win council and parliamentary selection contests.

## Labour Party

Socialist Party members have been extremely sceptical as to whether this strategy can work. The union was far too optimistic about the possibilities of recruiting Unite members to New Labour, given the general scepticism towards its right-wing leadership. But we said that the only chance for this strategy to be successful would be for Unite members in New Labour to fight for the union's policies.

But this strategy has been tested where Unite members, as Labour councillors in Southampton, Lambeth, Hull and now Warrington, have voted against cuts, following the union's policy. They have invariably been suspended or expelled from Labour groups.

Unite has defended these councillors, to some extent, but New Labour's

disciplinary actions reflect the near-impossibility of returning the party to its working class roots. Len has said that he will press New Labour not to oppose suspended or expelled councillors in elections but Unite must contribute to building local movements to back these councillors.

Despite some of his supporters' claims, Jerry Hicks did not support fighting for a new workers' party either, preferring to put forward a 'payment by results' policy: if New Labour repealed anti-union laws, he would support paying affiliation fees.

But Len and the union will be tested if and when New Labour goes into government. Will Unite sit on its hands and allow the right wing to get away with the continuation of austerity it promises or will it fight and face up to Miliband and Balls?

The Socialist Party believes that a new mass workers' party should be built for now. At the same time a left-wing Unite would provoke confrontation with New Labour.

What supporters of both Len and Jerry must do is work together to build Unite into a fighting union which will genuinely represent its 1.5 million members. This is the task of all those who want a trade union movement that fights back against the bosses' system.

## In brief

### STOP PRESS: CWU conference

The Communication Workers Union (CWU) general conference finished on 22 April with an overwhelming vote to continue support for a 24-hour general strike and for the union's national executive to do all in its power to prepare CWU members for the action.

**For more on this and other industrial news, see the Socialist Party website: [www.socialistparty.org.uk](http://www.socialistparty.org.uk)**

### Kiln workers strike

Morale was high on 22 April, with much tooting in support as expert "burners", kiln workers at Kings Dyke Brick Works, Peterborough Road, Whittlesey and members of GMB and Unite, entered the third week of their strike over arbitrary cuts to holidays.

Their employers, Heidelberg Cement (profit: £500 million last year), part of the Hanson conglomerate, had reneged over a deal whereby a cut in pay would be compensated by holidays. They have scrapped the holiday offer. Workers have already seen cuts in pensions, share scheme, and bonuses over the years.

The strikers have had good support from their trade union branches and local trades councils. They are annoyed at the problems the anti-trade union laws still cause but are determined to pursue the dispute. They were pleased to learn of the National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN) initiatives at national level. The unions are considering further measures if necessary to bring the employers to the negotiating table. Messages of support to Unite rep: stanleydow41@me.com and financial assistance welcome: cheques to "GMB" (write "Hanson strike" on reverse of cheque) to 542 Woodborough Road, Nottingham NG3 5FJ.

### Crossrail



**Blacklisting employers rat on workers** photo NSSN

The battle against blacklisting in the construction industry is continuing with high-profile protests in the last few days. On 16 and 18 April there were protests outside two building industry award ceremonies. Unite brought two huge inflatable rats and there were Unite organisers from all over the country.

There was a lot of excellent support from passers by who were shocked to hear about what has been happening and couldn't understand why billions of pounds of taxpayers' money was being given to contracts that sacked workers who raised health and safety concerns.

Protests are going on this week at the Westbourne Park Crossrail site, where sacked steward Frank Morris reported being assaulted by security guards a few days ago.

## The battle goes on at Thera



**Protesting Thera workers and supporters** photo East Mids SP

"This is the first time I have ever been out on strike and my first protest. I have really enjoyed the protest at Grantham today and will do it again if I have to."

These comments from a young support worker summed up the mood of members who took their protest to Thera HQ in Grantham. She said she will bring her own banner next time and more car loads of people.

Around 30 Unison members and officials from Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire turned out in force to protest at

short notice. Members felt really uplifted by the turnout from other areas and cannot wait for the next protest at Thera HQ which will be a lot bigger.

On the protest, Pam Shepherd, Unison regional organiser for Derbyshire Health branches, called for a two-day strike in May.

There will be a regional meeting to plan the next stage of the campaign which should perhaps include another protest in Grantham. And there will be another members' meeting in the next few weeks.



**Workers at the Crown Post Office in Leeds join the strike against closures and for a pay rise on 19 April** photo Iain Dalton

## Defend Ford jobs

**Pete Mason**

Ford's closure plans have angered workers in East London. On 18 April workers from Ford's Dagenham Stamping and Tooling Operations plant finished their night shift and descended on Ford's UK headquarters. Unite convenors from around the country were meeting management at a Ford National Joint Negotiating Committee (FNJC).

A consultative ballot for strike action gained an 81% yes vote from the Unite tool makers at the plant, since Ford announced the closure of the plant and a strike ballot is now proceeding.

Vince Passfield, deputy regional secretary of Unite told the Socialist that Ford's simultaneous closures of two UK plants - Southampton and Dagenham - was unprecedented.

Mark Stephens, plant convenor, said: "Never before have Ford closed a plant as quickly and the reason we're very angry is that although they've promised us all jobs there are 120 toolmakers who will not find suitable alternative employment in the engine plant next door. 40% of Ford's toolmaking has been outsourced over the years."

Dennis Varney, an ex-Ford worker and now a member of the Visteon

Pensioners Action Group (VPAG), joined the protest, explaining: "Given that Ford reneged on the Visteon pensions promises, it doesn't surprise me they are reneging on this deal. The only thing that Ford understands is a bloody nose."

National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN) national chair Rob Williams, an ex-Ford worker and former Visteon convenor, gave support and solidarity from the NSSN.

He said: "Given what the stark prospect these workers are facing and the fact that a big part of their pay-off is a bribe not to take action, the strike ballot and this protest is very brave and must be supported by other Ford UK workers and throughout the union movement. It also shows what could have been achieved when the closures were first announced. It's still not too late."

"Nothing is guaranteed but fighting now can at least force the best terms out of Ford. The closures can be fought."

"Hopefully, the convenors and the national union officers have made it clear to Ford today that 'normal' service is over and that if these workers strike, they will be fully supported throughout the UK with a call for support sent out across the company's European operations."

## Usdaw: End the partnership!

**An ADM delegate**

As Usdaw delegates descended on Blackpool for our ADM (conference), Morrisons have announced 689 job losses across its 490 stores as a result of introducing new technology into cash offices. Harlow could lose 800 jobs as the Tesco distribution centre there is under threat of closure.

Since last year's ADM we have seen the disgraceful story of Tesco warehouse workers in Ireland being tagged to 'monitor' staff performance, the closure of many high street retail stores and also changes to Tesco's pension. More than

170,000 staff will now have to work up to two years longer to qualify for their full pension. Disgracefully Usdaw even supported this last change!

It is imperative then that Usdaw listens to its rank and file activists and defends workers in Tesco.

Tesco have a long-term strategy of weakening our members' terms and conditions. It is about time the industrial approach of partnership is reassessed by the union.

• To find out more about the socialist opposition to 'partnership' and an electoral alternative for workers subscribe to the Activist, the bulletin for socialists in Usdaw for free at [usdawactivist@gmail.com](mailto:usdawactivist@gmail.com)



# Organise to bin the bedroom tax



## The first steps in east London

Sarah Wrack

Last week's Socialist reported that Waltham Forest Anti-Cuts Union (WFACTU) had sprung into action against the bedroom tax. At our initial meeting we met Alan, a resident on the Avenue Road estate in Leytonstone, who is threatened with the bedroom tax. Less than a week later, we were meeting again – this time on a street corner on the Avenue.

We had been door-to-door petitioning and leafleting three times that week. As we did a final round of putting leaflets through doors on the morning of the estate meeting, we saw that people had used the leaflets to stick in their windows and one person stopped us in the street to say she would be coming along.

Seven new people from local estates came to the meeting. Six will be affected by the bedroom tax – some losing more than £70 a month. The other, Linda, said she was there because her sister, who lives in a neighbouring borough, is being hit.



The outdoor meeting photo Suzanne Beishon

Several other people stopped to listen and sign our petition as the meeting took place. All were women, some disabled, some carers for

disabled relatives or children. When they explained their personal situations, it was glaringly obvious that the government is targeting the

most vulnerable, the sick and the disabled, in the hope that their isolation means they won't fight back. But it also showed that this couldn't be more wrong, they were up for a fight.

Some said that they might be able to scrape together the money to cover the loss – but after all the other cuts they've been hit with, they simply don't want to.

Two people had come after getting a leaflet that morning while attending an event organised by Ascham Homes (it runs council housing in Waltham Forest) to give financial advice to people affected by welfare changes. They had driven from an estate on the other side of the borough to say they want to get involved, giving WFACTU a new estate to start work on. All who attended were at their first political meeting and all bought copies of the Socialist.

The meeting agreed a two-pronged approach. Firstly we have to keep spreading the word, going door-to-door, organising street

meetings and helping individuals with the process of appealing against decisions and eventually defending against evictions. We agreed a time every week when we'll meet to do this work.

Side-by-side with that we have to have a broader political campaign against the tax. We agreed to organise a lobby of the surgery of the council cabinet member for housing and to ask the tenants' federation to organise a tenants' meeting.

We also discussed that in the future, if and when the local Labour council refuses to stand up for local people against the bedroom tax, that we would need to stand anti-bedroom tax candidates as part of the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition.

A WFACTU activist pointed out that Labour leader Ed Miliband had said on a recent visit to South Shields that he can't promise to reverse the bedroom tax because he doesn't know what the economy will look like in 2015. We all agreed that we're not waiting until 2015 to find out!

## One thousand march through Leeds



Over 1,000 people marched on the Hands off our Homes-organised demonstration through Leeds city centre on 20 April against the bedroom tax photo Mid Shelley

## How our campaign can win

Paul Gerrard  
Salford against Cuts

To charge tenants who are already on low incomes for having a room where people they are close to can stay is just about the meanest trick of a government which has a world-class reputation for mean tricks.

The government says: 'take a lodger' – but why should people share their homes with someone they hardly know, when they want to share their homes with those they are close to?

The government says: 'get a few extra hours work'. What planet are they on? Don't they realise that everyone is having their hours cut!

The government says: 'move to a smaller property or a cheaper area'. Where are all these one-bedroom properties? They don't exist. And why uproot yourself to a new area, away from schools, contacts, support networks?

The bedroom tax is an outrage, and that's why people are getting angry. Half the people signing petitions against the tax aren't even hit by it, but they know people who are affected – family, friends, neighbours – and they think it stinks.

Protests are taking off – not just demonstrations but targeted protests at Labour councils who, for all their 'campaigning' against the tax, will implement it to the hilt, and against housing associations who are busy taking on more 'enforcement officers' to 'deal with' the tenants who fall behind on rent. That's why we need to build street networks and 'telephone trees' to quickly respond to threats by bailiffs.

- No evictions of tenants who fall into rent arrears as a result of austerity cuts. Organise local campaigns to oppose the tax and defend our homes, and link them to existing anti-cuts groups
- Stand candidates against councillors who try to evict us. Build

a new mass workers' party that draws together workers, young people and activists from workplaces and anti-cuts campaigns, to provide a fighting, political alternative to the pro-cuts parties

- Cap rents and build homes. Invest in a major programme of council house building and refurbishment to provide affordable homes for all and decent jobs
- End low pay! If workers are paid a genuinely living wage they would not need to claim housing benefit
- Fight all the cuts. Trade unions must build for a 24-hour general strike as the next major step in the campaign against austerity
- For a socialist alternative to cuts and capitalism with a democratic socialist plan of production based on the interests of the overwhelming majority of people – not the 1%.

## Bedroom tax and room sizes

Many council and housing association tenants rightly question whether their box rooms should be counted as bedrooms. But for the purposes of bedroom tax a 'bedroom' can be of any size.

The government deliberately did not include a definition – instead they've said that a bedroom is a bedroom if the social landlord letting it says it is. They may come to regret this.

Already some councils and housing associations are renaming small bedrooms as studies and two-bed flats as one-bed – meaning no bedroom tax for the tenants and therefore less rent arrears to chase.

Online there have been rumours that rooms smaller than 50 square feet (sqft) or 70 sqft cannot be counted as bedrooms in law under the Housing Act 1985. Part 10 of this Act, which defines statutory overcrowding, specifies how many rooms a home must have for various numbers of residents. Spaces under 50 sqft are excluded from being considered as rooms at all.

Rooms under 70 sqft are counted as suitable only for a child over 12 months and under ten years. However, under these rules all rooms are counted, not just bedrooms. Incredibly a home with a living room, a large kitchen and one

bedroom is legal for up to five adults!

These overcrowding rules are so limited that households being charged bedroom tax will not qualify as statutorily overcrowded. Anyone sleeping in a bedroom under 50 sqft could just be told to sleep in the living room instead! Also, there is no suggestion in the Housing Act that 50 and 70 sqft are legal minimum room sizes – rather it appears they apply only to the issue of assessing statutory overcrowding.

The absence of any room size criteria for bedroom tax will of no doubt be challenged in court. The bedroom tax rules assume that one bedroom is sufficient for a couple, or two 15 year olds of the same sex. This ignores the fact that some bedrooms are only single rooms and too small for a double bed or two single beds. Some small rooms have nowhere for bunk beds to be sited without obscuring the window.

Tenants with a small room should ask for the bedroom tax deduction from their Housing Benefit to be reconsidered. Campaigns should put pressure on their local council and housing associations to redefine small rooms as studies as well as demanding the council not evict tenants for bedroom tax debt.

Sharron Milsom, Sheffield



Poole showed its opposition to the bedroom tax by donating over £70 and buying 82 copies of the Socialist on 20 April photo Matt Carey



# BREAK WITH THATCHER'S LEGACY!

**Socialist policies needed**

**Peter Taaffe**  
Socialist Party general secretary

“We are all Thatcherites now,” declared Tory leader David Cameron on the day of Thatcher’s funeral. “Oh no, we’re not!” roared back the working class in Goldthorpe, where over 1,000 protested, in Liverpool, Glasgow and London. Liverpool football fans unfurled a defiant banner at Reading: “You didn’t care when you lied, we don’t care that you died.” Everton fans produced a banner at Arsenal which read, “Rot in hell, Thatcher.”

Cameron was speaking for the ruling class, not the overwhelming majority of the British people who have rejected Thatcherism. His partner in crime in the coalition government, Nick Clegg, was quick to dissociate himself from the toxic legacy: “I am not a Thatcherite,” he said, even though he is participating in a government pursuing Cameron’s Thatcherite policies.

Even his own side scorned Cameron’s claim: “He’s not a Thatcherite,” said one senior Tory MP. “Fundamentally he’s more like Harold Macmillan,” (who pursued a so-called ‘one nation’ policy now copied by Ed Milliband and New Labour).

The organisers of ‘Operation True Blue’ – with government fixer Francis Maude, the grey eminence of the Tory party to the fore (also involving New Labour ex-prime ministers Tony Blair and Gordon Brown) – hoped that they could ride higher in the polls through a patriotic ‘Thatcher funeral bounce’. They hoped that this would create a platform for winning the next general election.

But they completely miscalculated as all the festering discontent which had accumulated from the Thatcher years, added to by successive governments, rose to the surface. The older generation, many still crippled by the brutal policies she’d inflicted on them, were reminded of what they’d been through. The younger generation began to understand that she and the system she defended were responsible for the terrible conditions which they face today.

## Class hatred

No figure in recent British history has generated such deep-going class hatred. This was repayment for the almost personal, cold cruelty which Thatcher expressed to what she called the ‘enemy within’: working people and their organisations.

The Bishop of London, attempting to soften her image in the funeral sermon, tried in vain to explain away her callous remark “there is no such thing as society”. She had denounced a humane, collective approach towards those who had suffered through her government. She unapologetically defended the neoliberal, greedy, dog-eat-dog society of capitalism.

But she did not generate glittering economic fireworks, record growth, as her latter-day apologists claim. The growth rate of the British economy in the period before she came to power was higher than when she was prime minister.

Nor was she an electoral wizard who seamlessly increased support from one election to another. Indeed, her highest share of the vote (44%) was achieved in her first election victory in 1979. She managed to win in 1983 through the split in the Labour vote following the formation of the Social Democratic Party, and by exploiting the patriotic mood after the Falklands War.

Thatcher was also helped by the shameful expulsion of the leaders of Militant (now the Socialist Party) from the Labour Party, presided over by then Labour leaders Michael Foot and Neil Kinnock. Thatcher and her henchman, Norman Tebbit, equally demanded the expulsion of Militant.

## Neoliberalism

She claimed later that her greatest achievement was “Tony Blair and New Labour”. In the 1987 election she was assisted back to power by the lopsided boom, but mostly by the inept lack of leadership of Neil Kinnock, as well as the trade union leaders who deserted the miners, print workers, among others.

Thatcher was not even the originator of neoliberal methods: privatisation, part-time and insecure jobs, driving down wages, etc. The ‘honour’ of first initiating these policies lies with Thatcher’s friend, the Chilean dictator General Pinochet, who butchered the working class and then pursued vicious neoliberalism.

Moreover, it should not be forgotten that the single biggest cut in public expenditure, as well as the partial privatisation of BP, was initiated by Denis Healey in the right-wing Labour government of 1974-79.

The results of Thatcherism were devastating for the working class and their communities, who suffered record mass unemployment of 3.6 million. It appeared as though a hostile invading army, akin to Genghis Khan, had passed through.

But she also compounded the problems of the class she represented – the capitalists – which has been left in its most exposed position in history. She encouraged the concentration on finance capital through the City of London’s ‘Big Bang’ deregulation, while allowing manufacturing industry to go to the wall.

When she came to power 30% of the economy was in the manufacturing sector but only 10% today. Her policies laid the basis for the 2008 financial collapse, which has ushered in a devastating depression in Britain as part of the world crisis of capitalism.

Before coming to power, the present Tory party tried to cultivate an image of ‘caring Conservatism’, attempting to put distance between themselves and Thatcher and the perception of them as

The facts give the lie to the Tories’ attempts to split the working class. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has pointed out that 6.1 million people classified as living in poverty in working households exceed by one million those in workless homes.

the ‘nasty party’.

However, prior to the formation of the Coalition, we pointed out that so intractable was the economic crisis, they would be forced to carry through policies much worse than those of Thatcher. This would lead to a huge collision between the working class and the government, which would pose starkly before the labour movement the need for decisive action, in the form of a one-day general strike.

## Stagnation

When George Osborne wept at Thatcher’s funeral, the tears could have been not just for her but the dire consequences arising from the collapse of his economic forecasts. Stagnation is gripping the economy and serious social consequences flow from this. Just weeks ago, he was claiming that unemployment was falling. Yet on the very day of the funeral, unemployment climbed once more by 70,000. A good day to bury embarrassing facts, as well as Thatcher! Criminally, 20% of young people between the ages of 18 and 24 are unable to get a job.

Moreover, the claim of Osborne and Iain Duncan Smith that employment was actually increasing and real jobs were being created in the private sector as a consequence of the cutbacks in the public sector was completely debunked through the ‘discovery’ of massive hidden unemployment.

Part-timers and the self-employed working for a few hours a week, an artificial boost to employment figures, disguise the real situation. It has been estimated that if part-time workers’ desire for a full-time job was met, it would mean 20 million extra hours worked. Meanwhile the TUC shows that 1.8 billion hours of unpaid overtime were worked in 2012.

At the same time, Osborne’s wish to rebalance the economy towards manufacturing industry was shattered by the announcement of a £9.4 billion deficit in the trade of goods in February. On top of this, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has issued a stark warning that he is “playing with fire”. This is unprecedented language for this body.

This is meant in a double sense: they are worried about the catastrophic effects of Osborne’s measures in depressing ‘demand’ in the economy and thereby deepening the slump. But they are also terrified of the social consequences of the continuation and extension of his policy, which will result in mass defiance, either in a conscious movement against the government through the trade unions or the outbreak of protest through riots.

Already, the IMF’s chief economist has warned: “In the face of very weak demand, it may be time to consider adjustments to the original fiscal plans.” In other words, abandon Plan A and replace it with some kind of Plan B. The IMF has already shaved 0.3% off its 2013

growth forecast for the UK, expecting it to grow by only 0.7% this year. This is the biggest growth downgrade of any developed country by the IMF for this and next year. This was followed by the Fitch ratings agency becoming the second to downgrade the British economy.

If Osborne and his counterparts in other countries persist with the present policies, it could “drag down living standards for decades to come,” warned YouGov-Cambridge. The same polling organisation also wrote: “Clear majorities across the Western world claim to have been personally affected by the economic slump.”

The clash in recent days has assumed a very sharp form between those who advocate further austerity and those who prefer semi-Keynesian measures ‘reflating’ the economy. This reflects a split at the summits of society over how best to ‘steer the economy’, while at the same time avoiding a surge of opposition from below by the working class and the poor.

And it is not just in Britain but internationally too where the dispute is taking place. An argument over statistics and how they are used in measuring the real state of the economy masks a division between different wings of the capitalists on how to approach the present crisis.

At the recent IMF meeting, its head, Christine Lagarde, criticised the US and other countries such as Spain for “unnecessary fiscal tightening”, ie cuts in government spending. She is clearly alarmed by the slowdown in the Chinese economy and the recent increase in unemployment in the US, which will reinforce the stagnation in the world economy.

## No solution

Neither wing of the capitalists can solve the deep-rooted organic crisis of capitalism. Osborne’s austerity will only deepen the crisis. On the other hand, semi-Keynesian measures like ‘quantitative easing’, the increase in liquidity through the banks, has already been tried in Britain and failed despite the injection of a total of £375 billion, one fifth of gross domestic product.

This has just allowed the bank sharks to step up speculation and increase their profits. At the same time, it has added to inflation that has raised prices for workers, which together with the holding down of wages has resulted in a real-terms cut of 10%, in median average in-



A placard at Thatcher’s funeral says it all photo Paul Mattsson

comes since 2008.

In Britain, it is quite clear that Cameron and Osborne’s policies are failing. In April, the rich received a tax bonus, while a savage £19 billion cut in benefits for the working class and the poor is being implemented. A damning Unicef report has revealed that already, out of 29

leading countries, the UK comes bottom for the number of children going into further education. Government cutbacks will mean 400,000 more children will be in poverty by 2015-16.

Osborne, together with the mad-dog right-wing media, tried to stigmatise the poor forced onto benefits in the wake of the Philpott tragedy.

This was a means of splitting the working class between ‘strivers’ and the so-called ‘undeserving’ poor.

It has already failed, according to polls. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has pointed out that 6.1 million people classified as living in poverty in working households exceed by one million those in workless homes.

Shamefully, New Labour, instead of using damning facts like this to counter the brutal propaganda of the government, advances its own ‘welfare’ programme in the form of public spending cuts: “Simply opposing the cuts without a constructive alternative is no good,” said John Cruddas, Ed Miliband’s ‘Policy Review Coordinator’.

## No cuts

The real alternative to the government is ‘no cuts’ and a fighting socialist programme, including a tax on the rich, nationalisation of failing industries, and linking this to the public ownership of the major monopolies which control the economy. A socialist plan, organised through democratic workers’ control and management, would eradicate unemployment and all the other evils of capitalism.

Miliband’s stance over Thatcher’s funeral has once more fuelled criticism and legitimate fears as to what a government led by him would mean for working people. We should never forget that it wasn’t the Labour leadership who defeated Thatcher – it was the poll tax campaign organised and led by the All-Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation, which Militant led. This consigned Thatcher to the rubbish heap of history.

Not a peep of criticism over her disastrous policies emanated from Miliband but just praise for Thatcher as a ‘conviction politician’. If this is meant to imply that Miliband is also cast in the same ‘conviction’ mould from the left, then he should prove it by proposing a raft of policies that will mean the beginning of a transformation in the lives of working people.

A good start would be to completely repudiate all Thatcher’s anti-union laws, without exception, which would then allow unions with militant leaderships to use their power to improve the lives of working people through fighting for increases in wages. Then there is housing. The Evening Standard reports that rents in London have increased by eight times



It was the poll tax campaign organised and led by the All-Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation, which Militant led. This consigned Thatcher to the rubbish heap of history photo S Gardiner

the rise in the average wage in the last year, pricing out most young people. On top of this is the vicious bedroom tax.

Given the state of the British and the world economy, combined with the further attacks which this government is bound to make on the working class, resistance is bound to grow, which will besiege the government. Even its own supporters were up in arms about the virtual abandonment of planning permission for the extension of homes, which would undoubtedly increase conflict between neighbours. Eric Pickles, the local government minister, has been forced to do a U-turn and water down his original plan!

## Resistance

Massive opposition is growing to the withdrawal of facility time for shop stewards and reps as well as the abandonment of the check-off system, whose purpose is to hamstring and cripple the unions. Boris Johnson is calling for ‘Thatcherite zeal’ from the government by introducing further anti-union legislation.

Remorseless pressure will be exerted by the ranks of the unions for more concerted decisive action of a general strike character against the government. It is not inconceivable that if the labour movement mobilises its full power, this government could resign and a general election be called. The problem is that right-wing trade union leaders are quite consciously applying an enormous brake on the movements of their own members to confront this hated government. This ties in with their wait-and-see policy, banking on a Labour victory in the next election.

The polls indicate that the Tories have not gained from Thatcher’s death and New Labour remains ahead. The capacity of the Labour leadership to throw away this lead can never be underestimated. However, as even the pollsters concede, the skids do appear to be under this government. A Miliband government is the most likely outcome of a new general election. But there is also a high degree of scepticism even among those who will vote Labour that this will represent any fundamental change.

Therefore it is vital that steps are taken now to lay the basis for the creation of a mass force, which can offer a way forward for working people. This is why the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition has been created as a step towards a new mass party of the working class. No time must be lost in building this in preparation for what will be one of the stormiest periods in history.

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# Why we're standing against cuts

## Vote Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition on 2 May

Central to TUSC's Mary for Mayor election campaign in Doncaster has been organising against the bedroom tax.

At a very good Mexborough Against the Bedroom Tax meeting on 18 April, around 25 Mexborough folk turned up. Mary explained how a socialist Mayor could use the powers of office to end this onslaught on the poorest in society by setting a budget based on the needs of the people of Doncaster.

People spoke about how the bedroom tax was affecting them and their families. Many were suffering from long-term illness or caring for disabled partners and were struggling before this hated tax. One older gentleman likened the Tory government's scapegoating of the disabled and benefit claimants to Nazi policies. A retired TGWU steward said he would help the campaign and had a lot of experience of helping local people with industrial claims and appeals.

Most people took window posters to support Mary, some taking several, and one went up in the club where we were meeting straight away.

Then on 21 April 25 people attended the first Conisbrough Against the Bedroom Tax meeting. The anger felt towards the Con-Dem coalition was palpable. More than one person spoke of how they were moved into larger accommodation by the council because they have disabled relatives, only to find that they are now being stung by this hated tax.

A consensus was reached. Both the bedroom tax and this government of the rich must go! Eight people stepped forward to form a steering committee that will lead the struggle forward. From this meeting an acorn has been planted from which a mighty and defiant oak will grow!

**John Gill and Steve Williams**  
Doncaster

I'm a PCS trade unionist and I've taken part in 12½ days of strike action in the last five years. We have never had a representative of the Labour Party even visit our picket line to show support, but we've heard regularly from Labour politicians telling us that our strikes are wrong. Trade unionists need a political voice that will support workers in struggle and TUSC is a step in that direction.

**Nick Parker**  
Lincoln East

This year's Cumbria county council budget has seen a further £24.5 million slashed



TUSC activists on the Save Staffordshire Hospital demo photo Socialist Party

from spending with 55 job losses, on top of the 720 already gone. With no overall majority it is to the shame of our local councillors that they operate within a Tory-Labour coalition to steal away our services. This can only continue as long as we allow it. Just one dissenting voice inside the council can be enough to draw others into the struggle, empowering working people and uniting our communities.

**Pat Timson**  
Kendal Strickland and Fell

TUSC is the only alternative to the racist, anti-immigrant division peddled by the Tories, Lib Dems, Labour and Ukip. TUSC seeks to build a united campaign for proper funding for jobs and services, and to unite communities against the racist division whipped up by those who seek to divide working people and distract us from the destructive effects of austerity.

**Emma-Jayne Woodhall**  
Lincoln North

In Gravesend there are plans by developers Edinburgh House to 'develop' the town's Heritage Quarter. Gravesend needs this type of regeneration like a hole in the head. There is certainly a housing crisis, but the council's response should be to build decent social housing in line with local wishes not hand respon-

sibility to outside developers whose main interest is making a quick buck.

Local authorities have been starved of the necessary resources by central government and are reacting by passing on cuts to local residents. They should refuse to do this and set a budget based on the needs of the community.

Big business is sitting on £800 billion of un-invested capital and we have spent billions bailing out the banks. It's about time we invoked the 'spirit of 45' and rebuilt our communities based on the values of collectivism and socialism.

**Chas Berry**  
Gravesham East

I am motivated primarily by the appalling unemployment, neglect and lack of support for our young. The bedroom tax is another ruse to further decimate disabled people, the unemployed and the vulnerable. So too the reduction in refuge centres for women who are increasingly more at risk as this depression intensifies.

Without urgent change we are facing levels of poverty not seen in 100 years.

**Fiona Joyce**  
Laurence Hill Ward

I served as a councillor for the Labour Party in Islington for eight years. New Labour was invented in Richmond terrace,

Islington, and over 15 councillors and/or officers of Islington Council served as yes women/men under Blair. In opposition they have done nothing but harm by not defending the people against these draconian cuts. Enough is enough.

**Robert Cossey-Mowle**  
Huntingdon East and Godmanchester

By encouraging people both locally and nationally to stand together against the cuts we can make our voices heard. The main issues we are campaigning on in Exeter include NHS privatisation, the bedroom tax, and the council tax hikes. We have received a great amount of support.

**Luke Pilling**  
Exeter St Davids & St James

I am a university student and am hoping to represent the students and the youth who are all too often ignored. I will say no to increased tuition fees, bring back EMA and start a proper job programme for the youth of the city. As president of the University of Winchester Socialist Students I have good contacts with other societies and the student union committee. My campaign will be joined by fellow Winchester candidate Dave Boyes.

**Adam Freeman**  
Winchester Westgate

# TUSC AGAINST CUTS

The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) is standing 121 candidates, in 20 of the 35 councils with elections this year. TUSC candidates oppose all cuts and privatisation. TUSC involves the RMT transport workers' union, leading members of other trade unions including the PCS, NUT and POA, and socialist groups including the Socialist Party.  
**See [www.tusc.org.uk](http://www.tusc.org.uk) for the full list of candidates**

I am a Socialist Party member and a trade union representative in Unison, with strong connections to the NHS.

Local ambulance stations are now threatened with closure by the East Midlands Ambulances Service Trust, increasing the response time for South Normanton and Pinxton residents. As a councillor I would help build campaigns to oppose all cuts.

**Brian Loader**  
South Normanton and Pinxton

Labour does not hide the fact that it would do much the same as the Con-Dems, only more slowly. I recently asked Ed Miliband, at a meeting in Stroud, when he was going to renounce New Labour. He replied that he had no intention of doing so.

I have been socialist-minded for most of my life and helped to vote in the 1945 Labour government, who, although not fully carrying out a truly socialist programme, at least created a welfare state.

I fully realise that in becoming a county councillor, should I be elected, I would not have direct access to government, but would seek to prevent the council obeying orders from government where they were not to the advantage of their electorate.

**Claude Mickleson**  
Cinderford, Forest of Dean

## Edmund Schluessel elected to NUS executive

Socialist Students is celebrating an excellent result in the NUS 'Block of 15' elections. Further to last week's report of the national conference, Edmund Schluessel has secured a place on the National Executive Council (NEC) by a comfortable margin.

The second Socialist Students candidate, Neil Moore, also received a very good vote, but was unfortunately not elected.

This success for Socialist Stu-

dents comes despite the fact that, in general, this year's NUS conference saw a shift towards the right.

As a whole, the left within NUS failed to secure an increase in its representation on the executive. But the clear politics put forward by our candidates, combined with their excellent campaigning record, was reflected in this result, which bucked the general trend.

Unlike Labour Students, who dominate the national executive,

Socialist Students members do not see this position as one step on the ladder to a high flying career in capitalist politics.

Instead, we will use it to help support and organise mass action against the attacks raining down upon students and workers from the Con-Dem government.

During his election speech, Edmund promised that he would fight for an education system that was publicly owned, democrati-

cally run and universally free at all levels.

This is contrasted to the defeatism put forward by the leadership of NUS, who would rather spend a year organising surveys and producing long, technical reports, than use the collective strength of students and mobilise to defend education.

On the NEC we will act as a voice for ordinary students, and will put pressure on NUS's lead-

ers not to abandon the battle field at this crucial time. Our intervention will not be confined to NEC meetings.

We will be using this position and authority to help build and give leadership to a developing national movement against cuts, fees and privatisation and to fight for a socialist education system for the 99%.

**Claire Laker-Mansfield**  
Socialist Students

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## SOCIALIST PARTY FIGHTING FUND

	£ target	£ received	April-June 2013		Deadline 28 June 2013	
West Midlands	2,100	665	█	█	█	█
North West	1,200	336	█	█	█	█
East Midlands	1,550	307	█	█	█	█
South West	1,400	266	█	█	█	█
South East	750	138	█	█	█	█
Wales	2,300	391	█	█	█	█
London	6,100	994	█	█	█	█
Southern	1,200	192	█	█	█	█
Eastern	1,200	181	█	█	█	█
Northern	2,900	156	█	█	█	█
Yorkshire	2,900	156	█	█	█	█
England & Wales	3,700	30	█	█	█	█
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>3,747</b>	█	█	█	█



# Dewsbury: Stop the NHS cuts!

Mike Forster

Around 300 protesters crowded into Dewsbury town centre on Saturday 20 April, to demonstrate in favour of maintaining all hospital services at the local hospital.

It is run by the same NHS Trust which has elected to take on its admin workers in a bitter industrial dispute to downgrade them, dramatically cutting pay.

However the day belonged to the local campaign group which marched through the town centre and was warmly welcomed by shoppers and bystanders alike.

One of the biggest cheers of the day was for Dave Byrom from Unison who demanded general strike action to save all public services, and to match the heroism of his local members who are gearing up for round three of their strike action.

Two local GPs spoke out against the Trust plans, also condemning the imminent privatisation of GP services across the board. The local MP Mike Wood even called for a generalised 'poll tax rebellion' to save the NHS.

## Local support

The march attracted a strong showing from the local Asian community which was also reflected on the platform: two speakers from the Al Hikmah centre pledged donations of £250 to keep the campaign going and congratulated 'our champion', Paul Wheelhouse, for his excellent campaigning work as secretary of the Save Local Hospital Services Group.



The demo weaves its way through Dewsbury photo M Forster

This was a local united demonstration of strength from all sections of the community in the same place where the racist EDL had held a rally of hate ten months earlier.

Members of the public were encouraged to fill in the questionnaires sent out by the Trust to con-

demn the proposals and to follow the campaign's pointers on how to answer their questions so as not to be tricked into mistakenly endorsing their plans.

A public meeting next week will map out a clear alternative to the Trust's appalling cuts.

Reflecting support for a fighting strategy to defend the NHS, the Socialist Party sold out of its 60 copies of the Socialist before the march started, collected over £160 for the campaign's coffers and raised £30 for the party's Fighting Fund.

## NHS: What we say

The Con-Dems' Health and Social Care Act (England) ends the government's duty to provide comprehensive free healthcare and removes the NHS from parliamentary control.

Primary care trusts will be replaced by 211 clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) that will decide who to treat, who provides the treatment and what is free at the point of delivery. Private companies will bid for CCG contracts. With further NHS finance cuts ahead, we are likely to see the restriction of free care.

Already, under Tory, New Labour and Con-Dem governments, we have seen the privatisation of most non-medical and some medical services in the NHS, with horrific results for both patients and health workers.

The trade union movement needs to organise a massive national campaign to fight these changes and all cuts and privatisation in the NHS. The Socialist Party demands:

- Axe the Health and Social Care Act
- Kick big business vultures out of the NHS
- Stop all pay and service cuts, closures and privatisation
- All hospitals to be fully funded by the NHS
- Adequate staffing levels to provide good quality care for all patients. Decent pay and conditions for all staff
- A mass national trade union-led weekend demonstration to save the NHS
- Health unions should organise industrial action to defend every part of the health service
- A 24-hour general strike against all cuts

## Wales NHS: Different government - worse cuts!

By 2014-15 spending on healthcare in Wales per head of population will be lower than in any other area of the UK. £1 billion has already been cut from the NHS Wales budget since 2005.

The NHS budget has been ring-fenced in England, with small annual increases, even though these represent a cut in real terms. The NHS in Wales has been given no such protection. Welsh Labour has actually chosen the NHS to bear the brunt of austerity cuts in Wales.

## Healthcare: The 'nasty party' just got nastier

The 'nasty party' just got nastier after Tory PM David Cameron defended government plans to make trainee nurses first work as health assistants to improve patient care. Cameron ignores the fact that trainee nurses already spend 50% of their time in clinical areas. In reality he is trying to lay the blame for problems in the NHS on over-worked, underpaid and stressed out health workers.

The Tories 'big idea' is meant to prevent a repetition of the Mid Staffordshire NHS trust scandal when hundreds of patients needlessly died between 2004 and 2008.

Nowhere in the Francis report into the Mid Staffs crisis is there any recommendation of this Tory plan. Moreover, the main cause of patient neglect there was the drive to achieve self-governing Foundation Trust (FT) status by NHS managers making staffing cuts, against a backdrop of PFI (privatisation) acquired debt.

In fact, despite existing nursing shortages, managers at Mid Staffs announced 160 redundancies in

2006. They also proposed reducing the proportion of trained nurses to health assistants on wards.

But Labour, which introduced FTs, doesn't come out of this smelling of roses. Patient care concerns raised by trade unionists in the Trust back in 2005 were ignored and the current £20-£30 billion of NHS "efficiency savings" ie cuts, were initiated under the last Labour government.

These cuts have resulted in fewer nursing staff having to cope with many patients. This dire situation was highlighted in a recent survey by the health union Unison. It showed that 45% of health workers were looking after eight or more patients on their shift. Looking after this number increases the risk of patient harm. Nearly 60% of staff said they did not have enough time to deliver safe, dignified and compassionate patient care.

Yet the government continues to ignore a key recommendation of the Francis report - the introduction of minimum staff to patient ratios.

## In brief

### Scary Act

When the government's Health Bill was being piloted through parliament earlier this year Jeremy Hunt, health minister, denied that the handing out of health contracts by the newly established clinical commissioning groups (CCGs - which control a £65 billion annual budget) would amount to a privatisation charter. Such talk he said was "scaremongering". To deflect criticism, Hunt said that regulations attached to the bill, which forced NHS trusts to ask private companies to bid for every service even if commissioners were satisfied with public sector providers, would be rewritten. However, it seems that the new regulations, currently going through the House of Lords, say essentially the same thing!

### Gold diggers

Even though a majority of health workers and the public opposed the new Health and Social Care Act it's clear that private health vultures are eagerly anticipating getting their talons on the NHS's multi-billion pound budget. According to the British Medical Journal over one-third (426) of doctors in executive positions on the new CCGs have a financial interest in a for-profit provider beyond their own general practice. The Journal reports: "In some cases, the majority of GPs on the CCG governing body had financial interests in the same private healthcare provider. "Although some doctors have relinquished interests in private enterprises because of their new roles as commissioners, the BMJ found that in total, 555 (23%) of 2,426 governing body members - including all clinical, lay, and managerial representatives - have a financial stake in a for-profit company."

### Corporate backers

To most people this new commissioning set-up clearly represents a blatant 'conflict of interests', but to corporate fat cats it's a handsome reward for bankrolling the Tory party. Overall, the 'nasty party' has been given more than £10 million from those with links to private health.

### Drug dealers

Pharmaceutical giant GlaxoSmithKline has been accused of buying off competitors to maintain its dominance in the health drugs market. The Office of Fair Trading called GSK's action between 2001 and 2004 market "abuse" after Alpharma, Generics UK and Norton Healthcare all received money not to enter the market with their copies of GSK's anti-depressant Seroxat drug. Pay-for-delay deals are illegal in the UK. Maintaining market dominance allows a company to charge higher prices and increase profits while the introduction of generic drugs can massively cut the price bill for the NHS. Clearly, nationalising big pharma would save millions of pounds for cash strapped healthcare services.



National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN)

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- new bulletin

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**Do you have something to say?**

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or phone 020 8988 8771, email: editors@socialistparty.org.uk.

We reserve the right to shorten letters. Don't forget to give your name, address and phone number.

Confidentiality will be respected if requested.

**Reason to make a stand**

I live in a local community that is being torn apart by the Con-Dems. I've lived through Thatcher and the miners' strikes. But now I am 51 and had a heart attack last year, and suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. I have just been hit with the bedroom tax and have to go in front of Atos this week, where I will probably be told to look for work.

You cannot split the main three political parties with a Rizla paper, three corrupt parties are destroying our country. We have had the hearts ripped out of our communities and now we're not even allowed relatives to stay. Thatcher gets a state funeral, while the rest of us get a pauper's burial. We're just scum to the political classes, they would much rather we did not exist.

This is my reason to make a stand and I hope to join the Socialist Party. Someone has got to fight for us.

**David Ford**

**Fitting**

I find it fitting that on the day of Thatcher's funeral I have decided to join the Socialist Party!

**Lauren Woods**

**Eat or read?**

Local authorities will have to choose between taking away free meals from poor kids and closing libraries. The New Local Government network's analysis of government policies for local government shows starkly that the poorest families, already under attack from welfare cuts, will face more attacks from local councils. As milk-snatcher Thatcher demonstrated, Tory governments can get Labour local authorities to carry out their dirty work. Few and far between were the Labour councils with backbone like Liverpool who dared fight Thatcher when Labour's leadership were insisting on "nice Labour



photo Paul Mattsson

cuts" rather than "nasty Tory cuts". Ironically, comedian Eric Pickles is proposing a library as a national monument to Thatcherism. So while they close libraries around the country, they will open just the one. It's what Thatcher would have wanted.

**Michael Davis**

**No tax, we're npower**

My gas and electricity supplier npower send me bills which I pay, adding just a little to their massive profits (up 34% to £313 million). But when the government sends this company timid and tiny demands for corporation tax, they file them in the wastepaper bin.

Npower chief executive Paul Massara told a parliamentary committee "we will not have paid corporation tax" in 2009, 2010 and 2011! He claims they were left off corporation tax because "we're invest-

ing hundreds of millions in keeping the UK's lights on."

From their huge profits, npower were 'investing' in a shareholders' benevolent scheme. And if I hadn't paid my bills for three years I'd have been living with no lights or heat in my flat.

The MPs slammed the big six energy firms for tax avoidance and concentration on profits. But why don't Labour MPs use their power to curb the power giants? Why not fight to renationalise one of Britain's most vital industries?

**Keith White**



photo CWI

**What's in a name?**

I'd like to open up a discussion on the future name of a new workers' organisation in the light of the new South African Workers and Socialist Party (WASP).

I think that in this country, especially among the younger generation the word 'party', probably because of past betrayals, has top-down connotations. I would suggest a future name of something like 'Workers and Socialist Federation'. Of course it would still have a party structure.

I would also like to bring to comrades' attention the word 'control' in the 'What we stand for' column. Again the word control has top-down connotations. Here, I would suggest, instead of "democratic workers' control and management" use the word planning, ie "democratic workers' planning and management". I'd like to hear other people's views.

**Bill Buchanan  
Nottingham**

**Bring bankers to account**

Why should we accept what this government and the banks are doing? Hitler and his army could not bring this nation to its knees. But politicians and bankers have. I thought we were supposed to protect our country from foreign and domestic enemies, so what's happened? These people should stand accountable to us, but they don't.

**Michael Mason**

**Thatcher's bunker...**

London's Ritz Hotel was a fitting final bunker for Thatcher. But history may yet come full circle to the heady days of 1936 when Ritz Hotels in revolutionary Republican Spain were commandeered by the then mass trade union organisations of our class: the socialist UGT and the anarcho-syndicalist CNT whose red and red/black banners hung from all public buildings.

In Madrid the Ritz was used as a military hospital for the workers' militias while the huge Palace Hotel was taken over for use as an orphanage. In Barcelona, the Ritz Hotel became Gastronomic Unit No.1: a

public canteen for all those in need ...and the CNT installed their HQ in the former premises of the Employers' Federation.

**Steve Poole**

**...and her mourners**

All the so-called 'great and good' turned out for Thatcher's funeral - from warmongers Henry Kissinger, Dick Cheney and Benjamin Netanyahu, via Apartheid-era South African president FW de Klerk, to her one-time billionaire backers. And of course there was the current crop of Tory toffs, including a tearful George Osborne (now he knows what effect his cuts are having on the rest of us!).

If this is a class war, I know which side I'm on: those in the workers' and socialist movement seeking to destroy the legacy and ideology of Thatcherism and all it entails.

**Nick Hart**

**Leicester's milky way**

I enjoyed going to the campaigning stall in Leicester on 20 April. I have been along to the stall twice with Kerry Feetham and really enjoyed it. Tom, one of the members, set me a task to sell a copy of Socialism Today and I managed to sell two!

I also had the idea of putting milk and milk bottles on the stall because of Thatcher the milk snatcher.

**Hannah, friend of the Socialist Party, aged 9**

**Solidarity v. selfishness**

Human solidarity predates socialism by centuries; our ancestors found they could achieve far more working together than by selfishness. Margaret Thatcher did not invent selfishness and greed but if, as Thatcher believed, there was "no such thing as society" it made no sense to talk about anything being "anti-social". Selfishness and greed were then lauded as positive virtues, those indeed of the hard-working 'strivers'. Thatcher believed in hard work and worked very hard herself. However the 'strivers' who benefited most from Thatcherism were spivs and speculators who worked hard at making money. Pickpockets can work very hard. One sycophant gushed on the BBC about how restricted the banks were before the blessed Margaret set them free from old-fashioned regulation. Then the commentator, realising what she'd said, said: "Maybe that wasn't such a good thing!"

Thatcherism was also called "rolling back the state" again ostensibly to free the hard-working strivers. Instead of subsidising the infrastructure for the public good, state money and assets found their way into private pockets. Far from showing capitalism's power, privatisation merely verified its rapacious nature. Public resources were plundered for profiteers' benefit.

The state, in the form of Maggie's blue cavalry, rolled over the mining communities and devastated the lives of thousands of people. For some reason a police truncheon on the head did not make them love Thatcher. How ungrateful.

The first response to Thatcher's death was to push "Ding dong the witch is dead" to the top of the Amazon charts. But we need a lasting memorial to Thatcher. For decades parents who saw selfish behaviour in their children would mutter "I blame Thatcher."

Every time you do something Thatcher would hate; every action which asserts there is such a thing as society is a nail in Thatcherism's coffin. And the time is coming when it will be buried forever.

**Derek McMillan**

# Cold, hungry, young and homeless

**Sandy**

I live in rural Derbyshire. We have a couple of large outbuildings and young homeless men often shelter in them. They cause us no trouble and just need somewhere warm for the night. On Saturday 13 April we found a cold, hungry and scared 21 year old girl sheltering there. She had fled from her partner who was mentally and physically abusing her.

I told her she can stay with us until I could get some help for her. I called the police who interviewed this young woman but there was nothing they could do for her. On Monday 15 April I spent all day ringing our local authorities who said they cannot help her apart from a night in a youth hostel. The young lady started to panic as she had been sexually abused in a youth hostel months before.

I agreed to keep her at our home until I could find her somewhere safe to go with the help she deserved. Local charities and social workers said they cannot help her unless she had a mental health problem, was disabled or had kids.

I have never felt so frustrated and angry, I was told because of lack of funding it was all a postcode lottery. Here is a vulnerable young woman, badly needing help and advice who was getting nowhere fast. Eventually the police gave me the number of a local women's aid charity, so after five days she found a place at a women's refuge.

When I rang my local council to explain about the amount of young



photo Steve Score

men that shelter here and now this young lady, they were shocked but did not want to know.

The young woman is now getting the help and care she needs. What would have happened to her had she not sheltered in our out-buildings I shudder to think. But what sort of society do we live in when the government is cutting back funding to help such vulnerable people?

This government should hang their heads in shame for what they're doing to the poor and working class though they don't live in the real world and as long as they're OK then nothing else matters.

It leaves a bitter taste in my mouth. We all need to stand shoulder to shoulder and do something about it. One day it could be your daughter or your mother who badly needs the help.

## Press - get your facts right!

An open letter responding to an article by the Independent's Jane Merrick (Independent 13 April 2013), from Tony Mulhearn, surcharged Liverpool City Councillor and last elected president of the Liverpool District Labour Party.

Jane Merrick's use of the term 'My city' (does she still live in Liverpool?) is the signal that, like many Liverpudlians who have 'made good', she is shaping up to put the boot in on the Liverpool socialist council [1983-7], using Derek Hatton's flamboyance as an excuse to pen something which reads like a composite editorial from the Sun, the Mail, the Express and the then Liverpool Echo, complete with unproven allegations of violence.

She even buttresses her case with millionaire Lord Kinnock's treacherous 'grotesque chaos' attack in 1985 to lend credence to her intemperate language.

She reinforces her true agenda when she pays homage to another millionaire, Lord Heseltine, for his assistance with some regeneration cash, neglecting to note that the same Tory slashed £120 million from Liverpool's budget between 1979 and 1983.

As to the worry her mother may have experienced as a result of the redundancy notice tactic, that's unfortunate, but she is using the only phoney weapon at her disposal to claim that the 47 [Liverpool councillors] set Liverpool back a generation.

If she would have carried out some rigorous research which one would expect from someone with the grand title of 'the political editor of the Independent on Sunday', she would have found that the 47 inherited a city in which 65% of its manufacturing had collapsed, when Liverpool was dubbed the 'Bermu-

da triangle' of British capitalism, and when major manufacturing firms had disappeared with the loss of 100,000 jobs. This was before the 47 were elected.

I assume that as a teacher, her mother belonged to a teachers' union. The tragedy is that the leadership of the main teachers' union in those years systematically undermined the campaign of the council to obtain resources precisely to defend her mother's wages and conditions and to resist the demand of Heseltine's colleagues to reduce the number of teachers.

The teachers' leaders even took legal action against the council claiming they lost pay as a result of strike action called by the other unions in support of Liverpool's campaign for more government resources.

This was at a time when Liverpool City council's workforce (including her mother) enjoyed the best wages and conditions when compared to all other councils in the country.

It's significant that Ms Merrick, in her eagerness to regurgitate the calumnies of the right-wing press, makes no mention of the houses built. She refers to the jobs created, the nursery classes opened, as some kind of irresponsible action, then blames us for rising unemployment in Thatcher's Britain. That kind of mentality defies rational analysis.

Perhaps the next time she is tempted to dip her pen in arsenic she might pause to reflect on the real story of the Liverpool 47.



# 20 years after murder of Stephen Lawrence

## When mass action and class unity beat back the fascists

**T**wenty years ago, the black teenager Stephen Lawrence was brutally murdered by five thugs in a racist attack in Eltham, south east London. The fourth racist murder of young Black or Asian men in the area in two years, it provoked outrage across Britain.

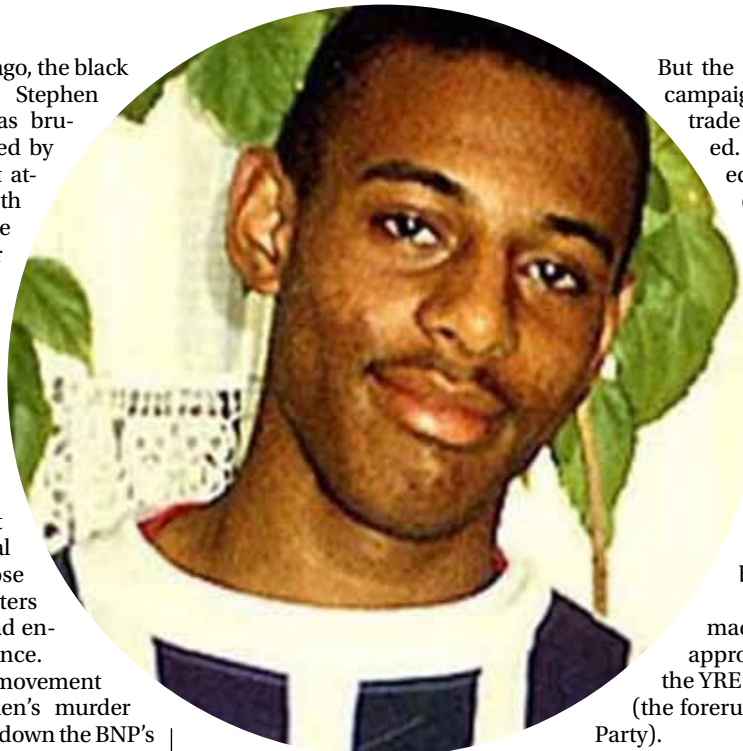
The shocking level of racist attacks was closely linked to the presence of the far-right racist British National Party (BNP), whose national headquarters in nearby Welling had encouraged racist violence.

The anti-racist movement that followed Stephen's murder succeeded in closing down the BNP's HQ in Welling and defeating the BNP on a national scale. The Lawrence family campaign succeeded in exposing the police racism and corruption that had stopped Stephen's killers being brought to justice.

Two weeks after Stephen died, as 8,000 people marched through Welling demanding an end to racist murders and the closure of the BNP's HQ (on a demonstration co-organised by Youth against Racism in Europe [YRE] and Panther UK, a black socialist organisation) the Metropolitan Police were blaming their failure to catch Stephen's killers on a 'wall of silence' from local people.

### Police mistakes

In fact the police were bombarded with information from local people but acted too late, giving suspects time to dispose of evidence that



**Stephen Lawrence**

could have helped link them to the crime. The police appeared too interested in investigating Stephen and his family for criminal connections to follow up the murder as what it was - an unprovoked racist attack.

While Stephen's murderers were being allowed to get away with their crime, the police poured resources into attacking the anti-racist movement. Riot police attacked both the main demonstrations to shut down the BNP HQ. The police tried to discredit the movement and scare the new generation of young people drawn into political activity for the first time.

For the second demonstration, of 50,000 people (co-organised by the YRE, Anti-Nazi League and the Indian Workers' Association), the police spent £1 million on their operation.

But the demonstrations and campaigns by socialists and trade unionists succeeded. The BNP were isolated politically and local communities gained the confidence to drive them out. Their only national public activity - a paper sale in Tower Hamlets, east London - was closed down and they lost their only councillor. Within two years the BNP's headquarters had been shut.

This success was made possible by the approach of groups like the YRE and Militant Labour (the forerunner of the Socialist Party).

Then as now, YRE and Socialist Party members call for mass action and using the arguments of working class unity to defeat the BNP.

The YRE was able to organise community defence campaigns, particularly among the Bangladeshi community in Tower Hamlets, as well as going into Welling and winning disenchanted white youth away from the BNP.

### Racism

Despite the promises made after the Lawrence Inquiry (into how the police investigated Stephen Lawrence's death), racism and corruption have not been removed from the police and the justice system, as recent figures show.

On the anniversary of Stephen's death the Guardian reports on new research: "Black, Asian and minor-

ity ethnic people are twice as likely to be stopped by police as they were at the publication of the Macpherson report [1999] into the murder of Stephen Lawrence. Among black people the stop and search rate rose by 120% between 1999/2000 and 2009/2010, while for white people the increase was just 7% - from 1.5 to 1.6 per 1,000 citizens."

### Mass action needed

The Con-Dems are not prepared to really tackle racism or police abuse of power as they are both essential parts of the system that they support - capitalism.

If we are to defeat racism and the far right today, who opportunistically use the anger and despair caused by austerity cuts to spread racist lies, the anti-racist movement must be prepared to take up such bread-and-butter issues as low pay, privatisation and cuts in public services.

It must oppose the mainstream

parties - Tories, Liberals and New Labour - who attack working class people's rights and build a new mass political alternative.

Today the BNP is largely in disarray but the racist hooligan EDL and the far-right nationalist Ukip pose as anti-establishment while spreading racist lies. The anti-racist movement must show that these groups offer no alternative and are dangerous opponents of the working class.

This is what the YRE did in Welling, and what the YRE and Socialist Party members are campaigning to do today. But while the unjust, exploitative and corrupt capitalist system remains, racism and the far right will always exist.

To eradicate racism and prejudice, and to remove the conditions that allow the far right to grow, capitalism must be replaced by a socialist society where the world's resources are democratically planned for the benefit of all.

See: [www.yre.org.uk](http://www.yre.org.uk)



The EDL's march in Brighton on Sunday 21 April, thinly veiled as a 'March for England', receives an even worse reception than last year as they are outnumbered 15:1 by anti-racist protesters along the seafront

## Caste discrimination: MPs side with oppressors not oppressed

### Senan

Tamil Solidarity international coordinator

Hundreds protested outside parliament on 14 April to demand the outlawing of caste oppression in Britain. A 2010 attempt to illegalise the discrimination suffered by many of South Asian origin was rejected by all three parties. This time MPs again voted against adding caste discrimination to the Equality Act by 307 to 243.

In 2010 parliament accepted a compromise motion from Labour left John McDonnell to undertake research, which has now been published. Outrageously during the recent parliamentary debate ministers, led by Lib Dem equalities minister Jo Swinson, continued to claim there is insufficient evidence of the extent of caste discrimination.

### Evidence

Not only has ample evidence been uncovered by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR), hundreds of victims of this horrendous discrimination were outside parliament at the time. Further devastating testimonials were reported in the press.

The NIESR research showed caste-based discrimination in schools and workplaces. In one in-

cident a student was refused entry to a school. There are many complaints of upper-caste carers refusing to provide care for oppressed-caste patients.

Recently the tribunal case of Vijay Begraj, a victim of caste discrimination at work, was thrown out as the judge was given information that she claimed could have impaired her ability to provide an 'impartial' judgement. During the case stones were thrown at the house of a director of Castewatch UK who gave evidence.

There have even been murders related to mixed caste marriages in the past and mixed couples who want to marry still receive death threats. But the government refuses to take action.

While caste oppression can be largely invisible to wider society, it causes enormous pain to those subjected to it. An estimated 400,000 'low-caste' people live in Britain. Swinson and those who opposed the amendment argued for education and not legislation to challenge discrimination - but both are necessary.

Caste is a remnant of feudalism, where society was divided into hierarchical groups, castes. People are forced to assume their caste by birth. Hinduism acts as the backbone in preserving the caste system but it is also defended by those who enjoy the resulting privileges, such

as those from the upper caste and those who use caste division to advance and defend their own interests. Although caste discrimination is illegal in India, hundreds of low- or oppressed-caste people suffer every day.

### Government allies

The debate revealed that the government, in defence of the status quo, is working closely with the very organisations that fuel caste oppression; the Hindu Council UK, the Hindu Forum of Britain and other organisations that are led by high-caste Hindus.

While claiming they don't practice 'untouchability', the Hindu Council defends it. A Hindu Council statement attacks those who criticise untouchability while ignoring discrimination in their own countries.

Incredibly they claim that: "There are now record levels of homeless people in the UK, who are analogous with the outcastes of Indian society. British menial workers seldom interact socially with those of the higher echelons." Of course poverty and inequality is growing in Britain and must be challenged. But equating the poor in Britain with the oppressed caste in India to justify unsociability shows the grotesque nature of the Hindu Council. Conservative MP Alok Sharma,

who has travelled to South Asia to promote trade links, defends the Hindu Council vehemently. He argues that "class discrimination exists, as do other forms of discrimination, but we follow other approaches for those, rather than legislation".

The accusation that class discrimination is often confused with caste discrimination is used by the Hindu elite to gain support. They rely on the ruling class's ignorance of South Indian society, portraying Hinduism as a monolithic religion and India as a country of Hindus.

Atrocities committed by British imperialism in South Asia have also been used to argue that no one from Britain has a right to meddle in these affairs. This is combined with the idea that 'communities' should have a certain level of autonomy.

In reality this means that an often conservative and right-wing leadership is consciously promoted by the main parties, New Labour in particular. This has provided 'stewards' to maintain what Labour sees as block 'community' votes, and to hold back resistance to the dis-



crimination working class and poor black and Asian people suffer in Britain.

However Dalits and other oppressed caste people in Britain have begun to raise their voices and to protest against

the promotion of upper-caste Hindus by the government. The growing protest has pushed some Labour politicians to act, at least providing lip service to their cause. Neither the equality bill nor any anti-racial laws cover caste discrimination, leaving victims unable to challenge it legally. Outlawing caste discrimination will encourage the victims of caste discrimination to come forward as happened after the outlawing of race discrimination.

However, as with legislation against racism, the law itself will not change the conditions and prevent discrimination. There is no doubt that the ruling class, unless stopped, will continue their collaboration with the feudal elite from each 'community', promoting inequality for their own economic and electoral interests.

See: [www.tamilsolidarity.org](http://www.tamilsolidarity.org)



# MASSIVE MARCH IN DEFENCE OF NHS

- **Stafford Hospital fights back**
- **National NHS demo now!**

Andy Bentley

Accumulated anger at years of attacks on Stafford Hospital and its hard working staff erupted onto the streets of Stafford on Saturday 20 April.

Up to 50,000 people marched to defend Stafford hospital in a town with a population of 63,000.

This was one of the biggest demonstrations seen in the West Midlands for decades, with protesters filling the long road to Stafford Hospital three times over.

A massive cheer greeted the frontline hospital staff banner as they carried it into Market Square to lead the march. These were some of the workers who have been pilloried for more than four years by the mass media and political leaders of all three parties for their 'failures' at Stafford hospital.

This march will go down in history as a determined response to the lies and distortions and a massive show of support for the staff at Stafford hospital and the entire NHS.

"I don't know if you've been told, Stafford hospital will not fold", sang hundreds of young people as they marched up Weston Road to the hospital. Pensioners marched and applauded.

What a magnificent answer to the decision by the government's health regulator to put Stafford hospital

into administration only five days before. These unelected butchers say they will consult local people about what services to keep. Yesterday's 50,000-strong street 'consultation' told them all they needed to know - save Stafford Hospital!

But this massive protest, organised by Save Stafford Hospital, also reflected a growing anger at the government's plans to cut, close or privatise as much of the NHS as they can get away with.

Private health company vultures are circling overhead waiting to swoop on the rich pickings that will become available if the Con-Dems get away with their plans.

Already, under successive Tory, Labour and Con-Dem governments, a big business 'culture' has been pushed down the throat of the NHS resulting in the privatisation of most non-medical and some medi-

"What else can we do? It can't end here. I can't wait for the next march!"

Jo from Stafford

cal services in the NHS, with horrific results for both patients and health workers.

Hard working NHS staff are then routinely blamed for any problems

that government policies have created.

Saturday's march, along with recent big marches to defend Lew-

"Now it's our turn to tell the world that we are proud of Stafford hospital and we will fight to keep it".

John from Doxey

isham and Whittington hospitals in London, sends out a clear message - that a movement of mass opposition can be built and can stop their attempt to dismantle the NHS.

It also sends out a clear and urgent message to the leaders of the health service unions Unison, Unite, RCN and others.

If, in just a few months, a movement built from below can get 50,000 to march in Stafford, why can't the health unions, with over one million members, organise a national weekend demonstration to defend the NHS? Stafford shows this would receive mass support.

**More reports and articles of the NHS - see page 9**

**See also 'Mid Staffs hospital scandal - Big business culture kills' online [www.socialistparty.org.uk/articles/16131](http://www.socialistparty.org.uk/articles/16131)**



photo Andy Bentley

"We never knew there were even this many people in Stafford," people joked, showing their elation that so many had come out to defend their local hospital

The threatened cuts show that the Con-Dems want to use the care crisis to undermine and/or cut Staffordshire Hospital forcing people to travel to Walsall, Wolverhampton or Stoke for treatment.

Funny that the exact same measures (removing A&E, maternity, etc) are proposed for west midlands hospitals in Nuneaton (travel to Coventry, Birmingham, even Worcester) and Redditch (travel to Worcester or Birmingham) and, we're sure, elsewhere.

It seems that behind all the health gobblede-gook-speak, hospitals are under threat of closing, as even large towns are deemed 'unworthy' of local hospitals.

## What we stand for

**The Socialist Party fights for socialism - a democratic society run for the needs of all and not the profits of a few. We also oppose every cut, fighting in our day-to-day campaigning for every possible improvement for working class people. The organised working class has the potential power to stop the cuts and transform society.**

**As capitalism dominates the globe, the struggle for genuine socialism must be international. The Socialist Party is part of the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI), a socialist international that organises in over 40 countries.**

### Our demands include:

#### PUBLIC SERVICES

- No to ALL cuts in jobs, public services and benefits. Defend our pensions.
- No to privatisation and the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). Renationalise all privatised utilities and services, with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need.
- Fully fund all services and run them under accountable, democratic committees that include representatives of service workers and users.

- Free, publicly run, good quality education, available to all at any age. Abolish university tuition fees now and introduce a living grant. No to academies and 'Free schools'!

- A socialist NHS to provide for everyone's health needs - free at the point of use and under democratic control. Kick out private contractors!
- Keep council housing publicly owned. For a massive building programme of publicly owned housing, on an environmentally sustainable basis, to provide good quality homes with low rents.

#### WORK AND INCOME

- Trade union struggle to increase the minimum wage to £8 an hour without exemptions as an immediate step towards £10 an hour. For an annual increase in the minimum wage linked to average earnings.
- All workers, including part-timers, temps, casual and migrant workers to have trade union rates of pay, employment protection, and sickness and holiday rights from day one of employment.
- An immediate 50% increase in the state retirement pension, as a step towards a living pension.
- Reject 'Workfare'. For the right to decent benefits, education, training, or a job, without compulsion.
- Scrap the anti-trade union laws! For fighting trade

unions, democratically controlled by their members. Full-time union officials to be regularly elected and receive no more than a worker's wage. Support the National Shop Stewards Network.

- A maximum 35-hour week with no loss of pay.

#### ENVIRONMENT

- Major research and investment into replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy and into ending the problems of early obsolescence and un-recycled waste.
- Public ownership of the energy generating industries. No to nuclear power. No to Trident.
- A democratically planned, low fare, publicly owned transport system, as part of an overall plan against environmental pollution.

#### RIGHTS

- Oppose discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, disability, sexuality, age, and all other forms of prejudice.
- Repeal all laws that trample over civil liberties. For the right to protest! End police harassment.
- Defend abortion rights. For a woman's right to choose when and whether to have children.
- For the right to asylum. No to racist immigration laws.

#### NEW WORKERS' PARTY

- For a new mass workers' party drawing together workers, young people and activists from workplace, community, environmental and anti-war campaigns, to provide a fighting, political alternative to the pro-big business parties.

- Trade unions to disaffiliate from the Labour Party now and aid the building of a new workers' party! Support the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition as an important step towards this.

#### SOCIALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

- No to imperialist wars and occupations. Withdraw the troops immediately from Afghanistan!
- Tax the super-rich! For a socialist government to take into public ownership the top 150 companies and the banking system that dominate the British economy, and run them under democratic working class control and management. Compensation to be paid only on the basis of proven need.
- A democratic socialist plan of production based on the interests of the overwhelming majority of people, and in a way that safeguards the environment.
- No to the bosses' neoliberal European Union! For a socialist Europe and a socialist world!




# MayDay

8-page greetings supplement

International Workers' Day marks the first US-wide general strike that took place on 1 May 1886 and commemorates the Haymarket Martyrs killed in Chicago by the police. Their strike demanded an eight hour maximum working day. Today, we still have to fight for decent jobs, working hours, conditions and public services, as the capitalists worldwide try to make working and poor people pay for their

economic crisis. International solidarity is vital in fighting for a socialist alternative to the failed capitalist system. May Day greetings show solidarity while helping to fund the Socialist. This year there is a record eight pages of May Day messages, reflecting the growing fightback and support for the paper that fights all cuts.



**SALFORD AGAINST CUTS**  
Fight all cuts!  
Axe the Bedroom Tax!  
May Day demo on   
Saturday 4 May,  
assemble 10am Bexley Square

Greetings from Trade Unionist & Socialist Coalition supporters in Greater Manchester, fighting the bedroom tax and building the anti-austerity alternative in elections and beyond. [tusc4manchester@googlemail.com](mailto:tusc4manchester@googlemail.com)

## May Day greetings from Socialist Party members in the National Union of Teachers and NUT executive member Martin Powell-Davies and newly elected executive member Pete Glover

- Support teachers' strike action to defend pay, pensions and workload
- Stop Gove's performance-pay plans dividing our schools
- Fight the Con-Dems' destruction of comprehensive education
- For a 24-hour general strike against all cuts



## Youth Fight for Jobs

Scrap Workfare!

Messed about with your hours?  
Do you face bullying at work?  
Paid less than a living wage?



## Are you Sick of Your Boss?

Text your name and postcode to 07749379010

**Campaign Kazakhstan**  
Campaign for democratic, social and workers' rights in Kazakhstan  
[campaignkazakhstan.org](http://campaignkazakhstan.org)

May Day greetings from Socialist Party members on the NSSN steering committee  
Come to the NSSN 7th annual conference!  
Saturday 29 June, 11am-5pm  
Camden Centre, Judd Street, London, WC1H 9JE  
Speakers include Mark Serwotka, PCS general secretary, Billy Hayes, CWU general secretary and Steve Gillan, POA general secretary

# May Day Greetings 2013

Unite Housing Workers Branch  
in solidarity with  
the **Socialist Party** and readers of **the Socialist**



★ No Bedroom Tax!

★ No race to the bottom in social housing and support services!

★ Jobs and homes for all



**Eastern Region Socialists**

**Basildon**

*Sends greeting to all in struggle*

**Cambridge**

*Bedroom Tax - we are not taking it lying down*

**Harlow**

*Support the Welfare Rights Campaign*

**Hatfield branch covering Welwyn Garden City, Watford and Hemel Hempstead**

*For a new mass workers' party*

**Huntingdon**

*Stop NHS privatisation*

**Ipswich**

*Support the Unite Rural Workers' call to keep the Agricultural Wages Board*

**Milton Keynes**

*Solidarity with the Tamil people fighting for their rights*

**Peterborough**

*Cancel all PFI debts*

**Stevenage**

*No to Academies; stop school privatisation*



**Stevenage and District Trade Union Council**

**Defending young people at work**

**socialist students** 

- \* Stop cuts and privatisation
- \* Fight for free education
- \* Bring Back EMA

**Waltham Forest**

**Trades Council sends May Day greetings to workers in Britain and around the world fighting back against austerity**

- Smash the pay freeze!
- Defend the NHS!
- Hands off our benefits!



# May Day Greetings



**Billy Hayes** General Secretary  
www.billyhayes.co.uk

**Jane Loftus**  
National President



**CAMPAGNING FOR WORKERS' RIGHTS ACROSS THE COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRIES**



01745

**EWU** 150 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1RX

[www.cwu.org](http://www.cwu.org)



**Billy Hayes**  
General Secretary  
www.billyhayes.co.uk

**EWU**  
The communications union



"Solidarity with all those in the struggle against global austerity. Join us in the fight for jobs and housing, for a life without war and poverty, on a planet safe from environmental destruction. For socialist democratic planning of the world's resources, for international socialism!"  
 From Socialist Party members and supporters across the Southern Region



Oxford

"Greetings from all UNISON support workers at Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust who are fighting against 15% pay cuts. Support workers of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your unsociable hours."  
 James Morbin, UNISON Convenor, SHNHSFT (personal capacity)



Aylesbury

"Defend the NHS, national demo now. Fight the cuts. Vote TUSC May 2nd Steve Bell, Aylesbury South West and Helen Tucker, Aylesbury East."



Reading



Bracknell Unite members send ...  
**May Day Greetings**  
 ...to socialists everywhere!

Bracknell

"No to ConDem cuts across Hampshire. For a 24 hour general strike. Support anti-cuts candidates standing for TUSC on May 2nd" Tim Cutter, Hampshire UNISON Branch Secretary (personal capacity)

Vote Hampshire TUSC, May 2nd  
 Jane Ward, Fordingbridge  
 Ania Waterman, Eastleigh West  
 Dave Boyes, Winchester East  
 Adam Freeman, Winchester West



Hampshire

"We need a leadership which stands tall and fights for members. The great only appear great when you are on your knees."  
 Paul Couchman, Surrey UNISON Branch Secretary (personal capacity)



Surrey



The government relies on local councillors to do its dirty work and make cuts in services and jobs. As Labour councillors we refused to, and we urge Labour councillors throughout Britain to do the same. The government would be powerless in the face of such determined opposition! May Day greetings to socialists and trades unionists in Britain and across the world.

Southampton City Councillors Keith Morrell and Don Thomas



Southampton

Portsmouth

Isle Of Wight

"Ryde Libraries funding has been cut, they have also cut the islands "supporting people" budget by £5.6million."  
 Fight the cuts. Vote Nancy Farrell, TUSC Ryde North East.

"The past we inherit  
 The future we build  
 No one forgotten  
 Nothing forgotten"  
 Fraternal Greetings!  
 RMT Southampton  
 Shipping Branch



May Day Greetings from

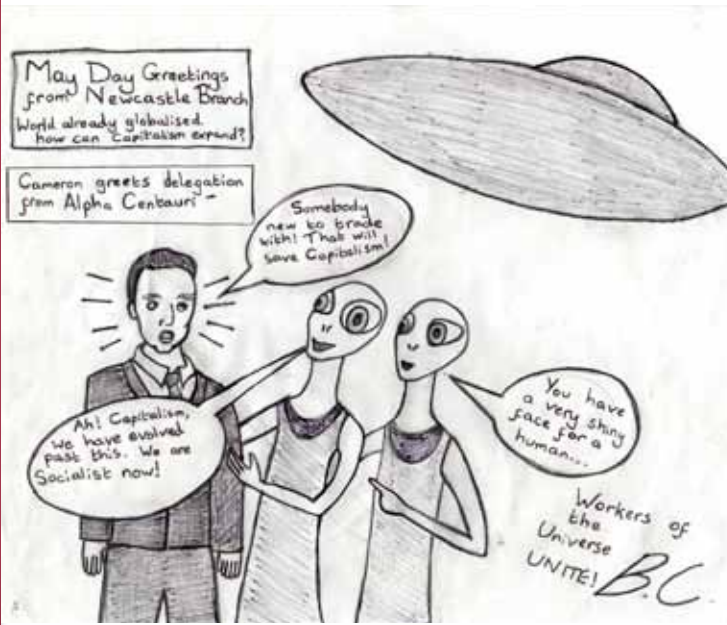
**THE LIVERPOOL 47 GROUP OF COUNCILLORS 1983-87 Now fighting all the cuts**



- Councils should not implement Con-DEM Cuts
- Mobilise labour and community organisations to fight the cuts
- Labour should emulate the Liverpool 47
- For a 24-hour general strike

Congratulations to the Socialist Party for supporting TUSC Onward to a new mass party of the working class and to socialism

Paul Astbury, Pete Ferguson, Tony Mulhearn, Harry Smith & friends John Marston and Dave Walsh



**Preston Emerald Celtic Supporters Club**



Sending greetings to all its comrades and members on International Workers' Day

**May Day greetings from Liverpool and District Socialist Party**



**Solidarity Greetings From Manchester Central Socialist Party**



"Society, which can only exist by your labour, is rotting away because the ruling bourgeoisie will not give up a single one of its odious privileges"  
 Leon Trotsky



Bolton Trade Unionists and Shop Stewards send May Day greetings to all our brothers and sisters on International Workers' Day

**UNITY TO DEFEND JOBS, SERVICES AND PENSIONS**



**EAST LONDON SOCIALIST PARTY**

Fighting the Labour council for the right to campaign in Newham, against the closure of Silvertown Fire Station and Ford Dagenham Stamping Plant!



**London Unite ITC Workers of the IT sector join Unite! FROM UNITE ITC LONDON BRANCH**

**LEWISHAM SOCIALIST PARTY**

May Day greetings from Lewisham Socialist Party. For strike action to defend our NHS and fire stations from cuts and closures.



**CAMDEN SOCIALIST PARTY**

May Day greetings from Camden Socialist Party

**pcs**

PCS DWP Group Executive Socialist Party members Send Mayday greetings to the **Socialist**

Tony Church  
Jimmy Gill  
Janice Godrich  
Gavin Hartley  
Fran Heathcote  
John McInally  
Sian Ruddick  
Sarah Vizard  
Katrine Williams

Fighting to defend our members' terms & conditions  
Fighting against public sector low pay  
Fighting for a fully funded public welfare system accessible to all

**Building for a 24-hour general strike**

**LAMBETH/SOUTHWARK SOCIALIST PARTY**

May Day greetings from Lambeth/ Southwark Socialist Party Defend London's Fire service No to station cuts or job losses



Ding dong, one step closer to a socialist world! May Day greetings from Hackney Socialist Party



**MAY DAY GREETINGS TO THE SOCIALIST NEWSPAPER FROM WHIPPS CROSS HOSPITAL PORTERS AND UNISON MEMBERS - FIGHTING THE EFFECTS OF PRIVATISATION SINCE 1997!**

- For a national demonstration to defend our NHS
- For national strike action to defeat cuts
- Repeal the Health and Social Care Act - renationalise all PFI contracts. Compensation to shareholders to be paid on the basis of proven need only
- For the return in-house of all privatised services - kick big business out of the NHS
- Nationalise under democratic workers control and management the pharmaceutical and medical supply industries
- Repeal all anti-union legislation
- For a 24-hour general strike to defeat all cuts
- For a new mass workers' party



**the Activist**

**The Activist - bulletin of Socialist Party members in Usdaw**

For an end to rotten partnership deals that sell out our terms and conditions  
Campaign for a living wage for all workers - we can't wait 'til the Tories get booted out

Fighting action to defend retail and distribution jobs - link up with other workers in a 24-hour general strike against all aspects of austerity, including our low pay

**Come to our fringe meeting at ADM Sunday 28 April - straight after ADM finishes for the day Britannia Room, Ruskin Hotel, Albert Road, Blackpool**

**WALTHAM FOREST SOCIALIST PARTY**

Greetings from Waltham Forest Socialist Party Building working class resistance to the Bedroom Tax and a fighting TUSC election challenge in 2014!



Greetings from University of East London Socialist Students Still fighting the unfair attendance policy. Solidarity to all fighting oppression and discrimination.

**MAY DAY GREETINGS FROM LONDON**

**TOWER HAMLETS SOCIALIST PARTY**

20 years since Tower Hamlets kicked the BNP off Brick Lane! Unite against austerity, racism and the far right. May Day greetings from Tower Hamlets Socialist Party



**GREENWICH/BEXLEY SOCIALIST PARTY**

May Day Greetings from Bexley/ Greenwich Socialist Party 20 years after Stephen Lawrence's murder Still fighting against racism, the far right and the cuts



**HILLINGDON SOCIALIST PARTY**

May Day greetings from Hillingdon Socialist Party

**FROM HACKNEY COUNCIL WORKERS CELEBRATING MAY DAY**

ONE STRUGGLE ONE FIGHT WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!  
Stop The Welfare Cuts TUC Off Your Knees Call a 24-hour General Strike



**pcs** PCS NEC Left Unity: Solidarity and May Day Greetings to the **Socialist**

**NO to austerity, YES to unity in action and a general strike!**

PCS NEC Left Unity members	Janice Godrich (President)	Andy Jennings
	Kevin McHugh (Deputy President)	Adam Khalif
	Sue Bond (Vice-President)	Marion Lloyd
	John McInally (Vice-President)	Dominic McFadden
	Mark Baker	Lorna Merry
	Clive Bryant	Chris Morrison
	Alan Dennis	Ian Pope
	Helen Flanagan	Andy Reid
	Cheryl Gedling	Dave Richards
	Kevin Greenway	Derek Thomson
	Sam Hall	Hector Wesley
Zita Holbourne	Paul Williams	
John Jamieson		

- Karen Lynn Education Convenor
  - Ken Coleman Housing Steward
  - Brian Debus Membership Officer
  - Clementina Anya Libraries
  - Lydia Julien Libraries
  - Janet Adegoke Libraries
  - Nat Neuwirth Libraries
  - Tina Mjeh Libraries
  - Margaret Sinn Libraries
  - Samirah Sharrif Libraries Steward
  - Ger Mason Libraries Steward
  - Andy Clifford Parks Steward
  - Paul Childs Parks Steward
  - Jean Howard Service Centre
  - Sandra Hall Joint NUT Secretary
  - Martin Cootes Unison Office
  - Debbie Peart Unison Office
  - Peter Coleman Unison Office
  - Len Stephenson Community Services Steward
  - Lee Ray Health Safety Officer
  - Ricky Campion Norwich University
  - Gurjit Bansal Steward
  - Earl Bailey Libraries
  - Simon Palastanga Unison Treasurer
  - Martha Alaneme Community Services
- (All the above paid for this greeting in a personal capacity)

**HARINGEY SOCIALIST PARTY**

May Day greetings from Haringey Socialist Party



**WEST LONDON SOCIALIST PARTY**

Greetings to the workers' movement around the world from West London Socialist Party. End all austerity evictions and benefit cuts. Support the Counihan-Sanchez campaign



**RMT**

**CAMDEN 3 RMT SOCIALIST GREETINGS ON MAY DAY**  
Thatcher is dead Let us now kill off her neoliberal ideology Forward to socialism

**UNISON**

May Day greetings from Socialist Party members on Unison NEC

- 24-hour general strike against the Con-Dem cuts programme
- National action to defeat the pay freeze

Jean Thorpe  
Roger Bannister  
Vicky Perin  
April Ashley  
(all in a personal capacity)





  
**South East Socialist Party  
 extends warm wishes  
 to supporters in the UK  
 and internationally**

### Brighton and Hove TUC Unemployed Workers' Centre

Brings May Day greetings to all those fighting poverty, racism, imperialism and oppression

**OPPOSE ALL BENEFIT CUTS AND ATTACKS ON THE EMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYED**

We say:

- Oppose all attacks on benefit claimants, the disabled and the low paid
- No to privatisation and PFI
- No to imperialism's war plans

Fighting Poverty Amidst Plenty  
**FOR INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM!**

4 Crestway Parade,  
 The Crestway,  
 Brighton BN1 7BL  
 01273 540717

**Bill North** - Chairperson  
**Andy Richards** - Secretary  
**Tony Greenstein** - Treasurer



**Socialist Party  
 Disabled  
 People's and  
 Carers' Caucus**

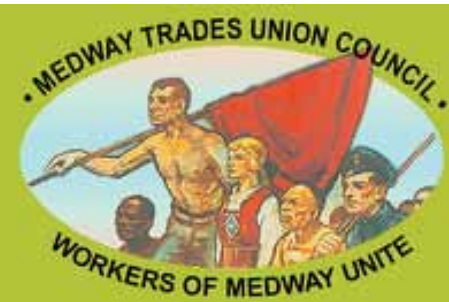
**Fight the cuts!**

If you're interested in the caucus, contact [benrobinson@socialistparty.org.uk](mailto:benrobinson@socialistparty.org.uk)

May Day greetings from Notts Trades Union Council...

**Solidarity can win**

### Solidarity and Greetings from Brighton and Hove District Trades Union Council



**Greetings to  
 all workers**

- Fight back against the cuts
- Save the NHS

  
**Socialist Party**  
*East Midlands Region*



Democracy for an insignificant minority, democracy for the rich - that is the democracy of capitalist society.

*Lenin, 1917*

**Solidarity greetings to  
 all those fighting  
 austerity worldwide**





**Birmingham Socialist Party sends May Day greetings to all those fighting cuts, bosses and capitalism. WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!**

**Leeds Youth Fight for Jobs: WE WON'T BE A LOST GENERATION!**

- Scrap fees and bring back EMA!
- Fight for decent jobs for all - no to workfare, no to underemployment!

May Day greetings to readers of the Socialist from Hull Labour Councillors Against the Cuts

**Hull Trades Council**


Solidarity with the workers of Kazakhstan

Workers of all countries, unite

Forward to socialism

•Gary Wareing •Dean Kirk •Gill Kennett

Solidarity from Save Our Local Hospital Services community group (SOLHS) against cuts to Dewsbury Hospital and supported by the Huddersfield branch of the Socialist Party

May Day greetings to all Socialist Party and Committee for a Workers' International members from Socialist Party branches in South East Wales:


- Cardiff Central ■ Cardiff South ■ Cardiff West
- Newport ■ Rhondda Cynon Taf

- For a 24-hour general strike against the millionaires' government
- Help build a new mass workers' party by supporting TUSC
- Build Socialist Party branches in every part of Wales

**UCU Wales Retired Members branch sends May Day greetings to trade unionists across the world**

- NO CUTS IN POST-SCHOOL EDUCATION
- HANDS OFF OUR PENSIONS!

Chair Pam Hughes, Vice chair Norman Morgan, Secretary Andrew Price, Treasurer John Martin



**May Day greetings to workers nationally and internationally from Cardiff County Trades Union Council**

- Oppose all cuts to jobs and services
- Repeal the anti-union laws
- Organise a 24-hour general strike to defeat the government


- President Katrine Williams (PCS) • Vice-president Catherine Peace (NUT) • Secretary Ramon Corria (Unite) • Treasurer Armajite Singh (CWU)

**Hull branch NE-GEO-25 of Unite the Union**

May Day greetings to all workers

- Nationalise the banks, utilities and the railways
- End the scourge of agency employment and return to direct employment
- End blacklisting of activists
- 35-hour working week and full employment

(Political representation to achieve the above)



**Swansea Socialist Party - Plaid Sosaidd Abertawe**

Fight the Bedroom Tax

- Don't Pay! Will Stay!

Ymladd yn erbyn y Treth Ystafell Wely

- Peidiwch a Thalu! Peidiwch a Symud!



Andrew Price, veteran Socialist Party member, in October 2012, on an adapted bike for disabled people, cycled 12 miles from Pontcanna, Cardiff to Tongwynlais and back, raising £425 for the Socialist Party fighting fund. This year he will be cycling for the fighting fund the same distance from Pontcanna to Cardiff and back.

- Greetings to workers everywhere, especially those who are disabled
- Oppose all attacks on benefits
- Build a new mass workers' party by supporting TUSC

**The Tamil Solidarity campaign sends May Day solidarity greetings to the workers around the world and stands with them in the struggle to defend their rights.**

Tamil Solidarity stands with all oppressed people and workers around the world and for building strong solidarity with others. We oppose any caste, gender, religious, and cultural oppression. Working class Tamils are faced with two enemies: the chauvinist Sri Lankan regime and the capitalist system that protects it. We fight them both and join the workers of the world to strengthen our fightback.



'Life is beautiful. Let the future generations cleanse it of all evil, oppression and violence, and enjoy it to the full.' Leon Trotsky

**Ipswich & District TUC send May Day greetings to you all and remembering Roger MacKay - a true class fighter to the end.**

Join us at our May Day Festival on Sunday 5 May

www.ipswichmaydayfestival.co.uk

**May Day greetings from Swansea Trades Council**

Defending workers - Fighting the cuts

**Cyfarchion ar Ddiwrnod Rhyngwladol y Gweithwyr oddi wrth Cyngor Undebau Llafur Abertawe**

Amddiffyn y gweithwyr - ymladd yn erbyn y toriadau

Let's rally for **NATIONAL ACTION TO SAVE THE NHS**

Greetings, Unite Nottinghamshire Health Branch (EM/NG32)



**May Day greetings from Llanelli - the town where Thatcher feared to tread**



Llanelli and West Wales Socialist Party

**May Day Greetings from Swansea and District NUJ**

Standing up for Journalists and Journalism in South West Wales

**Cyfarchion ar Ddiwrnod Rhyngwladol y Gweithwyr oddi wrth Undeb y Newyddiadurwyr Abertawe**

Yn amddiffyn newyddiadurwyr a newyddiaduraeth yn Ne Orllewin Cymru

**"Kick out the Con-Dems - We need a general strike!"**

**Vote TUSC on 2nd May**

Solidarity from the South West National Shop Stewards Network

Solidarity greetings from Bristol South Socialist Party

**CWU**  
The communications union

**Socialist Party members in the Communication Workers Union send greetings to postal and telecoms workers around the world**

- No privatisation of the Post Office
- For the nationalisation of the entire telecoms industry

**Exeter Socialist Party sends greetings to socialists in the CWI. Solidarity with our comrades in South Africa**

**Full support to our TUSC candidates in Devon**

Hasta la victoria siempre!



**socialist books**

Remember the Haymarket Martyrs, the spark of May Day 1886.

Our books provide lessons from the historic struggles for the way forward

**Greetings on International Workers' Day from Socialist Books and Left books**

