the Socialist
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www.socialistparty.org.uk

Building the anti-cuts fightback

Local campaign launches

Brighton

OVER 200 people packed into Friends Meeting House in Brighton on Thursday 9 September to launch a community-wide campaign against cuts.

Speaking from the trade union movement, Chris Baugh (PCS) and Andy Richards (Unison) dismantled the received wisdom of reducing government debt through cuts and highlighted the vast long-term costs of cutting key public services and forcing thousands into unemployment and below the poverty line.

Chris Baugh called for united action within the labour movement and for unions to develop links across the public sector and with local communities.

Ümit Ozturk from the Mediterranean Resources Network said Cameron's "big society" double-speak actually signalled a new battle in the war between the hungry and the greedy.

Green Party MP Caroline Lucas arrived late from parliament and delivered a message of unity whilst describing the cuts as an attack on the 'living wage'.

Brighton Benefits called for employed and unemployed workers to unite, describing how cuts to welfare are intended to 'soften up' the labour market by driving the unemployed into destitution and desperation.

Pete Offord from Brighton Socialist Party argued for a strategy to put pressure on the local councillors to reject the cuts and propose an alternative budget that reflects the needs of ordinary people, and to wage a campaign for the difference in funding to come from the government. Pete said that if no Brighton councillors are willing to do this, Brighton Stop the Cuts Coalition should consider standing its own candidates who will.

Angry Connexions workers described the appalling effects that planned cuts to their organisation would have for disadvantaged young people, whilst cuts to the meagre mental health budget were slammed by the NHS Support Foundation.

Organisations were welcomed to send delegates to plan for the European Day of Action against the cuts on 29 September.

Shona McCulloch
Brighton Socialist Party

Ümit Ozturk said Cameron's "big society" double-speak actually signalled a new battle in the war between the hungry and the greedy.

Chris Baugh speaking at the Brighton meeting. *photo Brighton SP*

Swansea

AROUND 70 trade unionists and community campaigners attended Swansea trade union council's public meeting and agreed to launch an anti-cuts campaign. Many of those who attended were on the National Shop Stewards Network lobby of the TUC.

Speakers warned the meeting about the Con-Dem cuts to come but also described the massive cuts that they have faced over the last few years.

Labour Party members were present and a local councillor gave support from the floor. This was welcomed by the meeting but only on the basis that they refuse to implement the cuts. As someone from the audience warned: "We'll totally support any Labour MP, Welsh Assembly Member and councillor who refuses to carry out the cuts but not if they carry them out. If you walk like the enemy, talk like the enemy and shoot like the enemy, you are the enemy!"

The meeting agreed to hold a rally in the city's Castle Square at 6pm on 29 September as part of the Europe-wide day of action against the cuts.

Rob Williams
Swansea trade union council

Portsmouth

THE FIRST public meeting of Portsmouth trades council's anti-cuts campaign saw 80 trade unionists and community activists packed into a university lecture hall on Thursday 16 September to discuss and debate with speakers from the RMT, Unite and Unison unions.

On the platform RMT deputy general secretary Pat Sikorski was joined by Unite general secretary candidate Jerry Hicks and Unison regional officer Phil Woods.

Sikorski said that we should not accept one single cut. In comparison Woods was forced to defend himself from questions from the floor on why he had openly accepted the need for cuts on the local TV news the night before.

The meeting will be followed by a rally in central Portsmouth on 29 September as part of the international day of workers' action, called by the European Trade Union Confederation.

Ben Norman
Portsmouth Socialist Party

Coventry 'one-stop' protest

Socialist councillor Dave Nellist (right) at the lobby.
photo Coventry SP

A 30-STRONG crowd of determined residents from the Stoke Aldermoor estate in Coventry lobbied the city council meeting on Tuesday 14 September to save their local council neighbourhood management 'one stop' service office. It is one of five around the city that are in for the chop, that provide vital advice, support and services.

One resident, waving a placard made by teenagers at the youth centre on the estate, that is also under threat from cuts, said: "The area is becoming like an isolated island, everything keeps disappearing."

The small 'desert' that surrounds the estate, a former car factory, is a sad symbol of the years of clobbering done to Coventry's manufacturing base by the Tories, Labour and big business.

• Coventry Against the Cuts public meeting, Tuesday 28 September, 7.30pm, Methodist Central Hall, Coventry. Speakers include Socialist Party councillor Dave Nellist and FBU general secretary Matt Wrack.

Lenny Shail, Coventry West Socialist Party

Help the Socialist Party reach its fighting fund target

THE SOCIALIST Party fighting fund has reached 59% of the national target, with less than three weeks of the July-September quarter to go. The last two quarters finished on 101% and 95% respectively, so the party is on course to make the overall yearly fighting fund target, as long as branches pull out all the stops for the last part of this quarter. Branches should try to have longer Saturday and weekday stalls over the next fortnight.

Caerphilly Socialist Party branch is flying ahead with its work on campaign stalls against fire service cuts in South Wales. Two members, with an average of three stalls a week, two hours or more on each stall, have raised the bulk of the £781 putting them on 260% of their target.

Kent Socialist Party is on 128% on the basis of regular stalls, some campaigning against youth unemployment and others against the privatisation of auxiliary services at Medway maritime hospital.

Mansfield Socialist Party, currently campaigning against education cuts, is on 134% of its target. The new Salford branch is on 113% of its target, mainly raising this money on stalls where we offer a socialist alternative to cuts in services.

Jane Ward from Southampton Socialist Party, which is on 114%, said: "We've been running a campaign against the closure of a walk-in centre in Southampton that would leave half of the city without emergency care. In one day of socialist campaigning we raised £60 in Bitterne with people there queuing to sign our petition."

Leeds and Bradford branch has held at least three anti-cuts stalls a week. £55 was raised in one week, taking the branch's fighting fund total to 128%.

Tower Hamlets Socialist Party is on 193% of its target which includes a £500 donation from a supporter.

Stevenage branch is on 321% of its target through a total of £700 donations from generous members and £500 proceeds from the burger bar at the August bank holiday summer camp.

• Can you make a donation? Phone 020 8988 8777, go to www.socialistparty.org.uk/donate or use the slip below.

Alex Gounelas
national fighting fund organiser

National committee

THE SOCIALIST Party's national committee (NC) met on 18 and 19 September. There were discussions on perspectives for social, economic and political developments in Britain, building the anti-cuts movement, and developing the party's website, The Socialist and other media.

datesforyourdiary

www.socialistparty.org.uk/whatson

Leeds Socialist Party
How do we build a mass fightback against education cuts?
Monday 27 September, 7.30pm
The Adelphi Pub, 1-3 Hunslet Road, Leeds

Leicestershire Against Cuts
Tuesday 28 September, 7.30pm
Y Theatre, off London Road, Leicester, opposite train station
Speakers: Janice Godrich, president, PCS union; Jean Thorpe, Unison NEC, pc; Nina Franklin, NUT

North West Youth Fight for Jobs
Join the protests – for free education, better student grants, and real jobs
Wednesday 29 September
Liverpool, 5pm, Derby Square
Manchester, 5pm, Piccadilly Gardens
Salford, 4pm, Old Fire Station

Manchester Youth Fight for Jobs
Young workers united against cuts protest
Saturday 2 October, 1pm
St Peters Square
Open debate after demo

London Socialist Party and Socialist Students
Fight the cuts: how we beat the Tories last time
Wednesday 6 October, 7.30pm
University of London Union, Malet Street, Euston WC1E 7HY

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SOCIALIST PARTY FIGHTING FUND

July-September 2010 deadline: 8 October

	£ target	£ received
West Midlands	2,100	2,612
Eastern	1,200	1,485
South East	800	803
Wales	2,300	2,233
Southern	1,200	895
South West	1,400	910
North West	1,200	719
East Midlands	1,550	807
Yorkshire	2,900	1,380
London	6,100	2,333
Northern	600	173
England & Wales	3,650	353
TOTAL	25,000	14,707