

Coventry action against academies grows

Sunara Begum
Coventry Socialist Party

A third trade union, Unison, has now joined the battle to defend comprehensive education against the privatisation of our education via 'academies' in Coventry.

Wednesday 25 May saw a meeting packed with almost 100 people, from school students to parents and teachers. Unison members at Tile Hill Wood school then walked out at lunchtime on 26 and 27 May. They were joined by NUT and NASUWT, as well as Youth Fight for Jobs activists and Socialist Party members on the picket lines.

Tile Hill Wood school's food and textiles technician said: "It's important to stick together in the fight against academies, and I'm on strike against academies for the same reasons as the teachers." She also said academies would mean "uncertainty for pupils and lead to dwindling numbers of pupils and more redundancies".

School students from both Woodlands and Tile Hill Wood, some of whom were preparing for exams,

came to support the pickets as the lunch hour was ending. They gave a great boost of confidence and support to the striking teachers as they spoke of how, at this early stage of the campaign, students are fighting back alongside their teachers.

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Petitions against academies have been signed outside classrooms. A Facebook page, ran by school and college students, is called Coventry Youth Against Academies. School pupils have refused to go into lessons in support of their teachers on strike.

There has also been a protest against academies in the school by school students. They were inspired by the anti-fees and save EMA protests that took place last autumn, including protests in Coventry that were organised by young members of the Socialist Party and Youth Fight for Jobs and Education.

Tile Hill Wood school has now



School students have taken action against academies photo Coventry SP

seen its fifth action against academies. With a third union joining the action, and the possibility of other schools striking over academies, the fight will continue.

Please send emails to the chair of governors at Tile Hill Wood, expressing support for staff action: chair-governors@thw.coventry.sch.uk
To get involved with the Coventry

campaign against academies contact: cov_against_academies@hotmail.co.uk. You can also join the Coventry Youth Against Academies group on Facebook.

Fight goes on against day centre closure



The campaign will demand the centre gets re-opened photo Wales SP

Rob Owen
Llanelli Against the Cuts

Pensioners and unemployed people who use Noddfa Teilo Day Club in Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire, along with supporters, took part in an emotional protest as the day centre closed on Friday 27 May.

Carmarthenshire county council - controlled by 'independents' and New Labour - has said it can't afford to keep Noddfa Teilo and four other day centres open.

War veterans and centre users in their 90s took part in the protest, alongside users who had chained themselves to railings outside the centre, and trade unionists and members of political parties, including the Socialist Party.

For the 35 users of the centre it was a bitter day to experience the closure while at the same time it

was reported that council officials were likely to be receiving bonuses of £20,000 or more.

The day club users had not taken the threatened closure lying down, however, and Rhian Barr, aged 75, had tirelessly organised a petition against the closure which has attracted nearly 2,000 signatures.

This petition will be presented to the council on 8 June, when the club users and supporters will lobby the council.

Rhian and Unison secretary Mark Evans pledged that this campaign was far from over. The campaign in Carmarthenshire would continue to fight all cuts and would be working to get any cuts that have been implemented so far reversed.

Rhian told the Socialist: "We're going to fight this to the end. Why should these people lose their facility, which is a lifeline for many of us? The councillors who voted for

this haven't been anywhere near the place.

"We have really appreciated the support we have had from union members and those in political parties."

Carmarthenshire county Unison secretary Mark Evans said: "On the same day as they announced the closures of Noddfa Teilo Day Club they announced redundancies of our members. We feel it's all part of the same fight.

"The councillors don't need to make these cuts. They have £42 million in reserves and have boasted that they have under-spent by £1 million, yet to save £400,000 they are closing these day clubs.

"I am confident that this cut and other cuts can be stopped if we unite all those affected."

The protesters' emotional farewell to their centre was featured on the BBC Wales news.

Cardiff NHS protest against Topshop tax dodger

Dave Reid

Topshop in Cardiff city centre was occupied on Saturday 28 May. This was in protest at cuts to the NHS taking place while billionaire business people like Topshop's owner Sir Phillip Green avoid paying tax.

Green, for example, gave himself a bonus of £1.2 billion, but paid it to his wife who is registered as a resident of Monaco and so avoided paying £500 million tax in Britain.

UK Uncut activists joined with members of Cardiff Against the Cuts, socialists and other anti-capitalist campaigners to occupy Topshop's flagship store in Wales for an hour. Security personnel grappled with peaceful

protesters as Topshop management closed the store.

Hundreds of shoppers and protesters gathered outside the store as a stand-off with the police developed. Most shoppers supported the protest.

The UK Uncut occupation coincided with a number of protests in Cardiff city centre.

Some Spanish students had organised a Democrata Real Ya rally in support of youth occupying squares in Spanish cities against unemployment. Cardiff Against the Cuts organised a 'Busk Against the Cuts' and Socialist Party members campaigned against £1.9 billion being cut from the NHS in Wales.

All four campaigns came together at the Topshop protest.



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SOCIALIST PARTY FIGHTING FUND

	£ target	£ received	April-June 2011				Deadline: 8 July
Wales	2,300	1,633	■	■	■	■	■
Yorkshire	2,900	1,639	■	■	■	■	■
West Midlands	2,100	877	■	■	■	■	■
South West	1,400	549	■	■	■	■	■
Eastern	1,200	456	■	■	■	■	■
North West	1,200	451	■	■	■	■	■
South East	1,000	355	■	■	■	■	■
Southern	1,200	421	■	■	■	■	■
East Midlands	1,550	439	■	■	■	■	■
London	6,100	1,485	■	■	■	■	■
Northern	600	112	■	■	■	■	■
England & Wales	3,450	2,321	■	■	■	■	■
TOTAL	25,000	10,741	■	■	■	■	■