

# A SOCIALIST CHARTER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

## WE WON'T SACRIFICE OUR FUTURE TO CAPITALIST CRISIS



**T**he future faced by young people in the crisis-ridden world means a fightback is necessary. Mass youth unemployment is widely predicted. The collapse in university funding further threatens our right to education. Our ability to move out of home and the hope of a decent life, not weighed down by debt and low pay, were already severely limited.

The corona crisis has further exposed that the capitalist system and its parties of the rich cannot be trusted to give us a future. They tell us a job, a home, an education and access to health and other services are unaffordable. But while

young people are struggling, the shareholders in Britain's top 100 companies have doubled their annual take to £110 billion over the last decade! The top 1,000 wealthiest people in the UK have a combined wealth of £743 billion!

Young people have no choice but to get organised and fight for a future. Before the covid pandemic hit, the world was being shaken by mass movements – from Chile to Lebanon to Hong Kong – with courageous young people playing a big role. Now the covid crisis and the economic crisis it has opened up have intensified the inequality that triggered those movements. Already some

of those movements are re-emerging – and they will spread and grow. The fight for a future is the fight for socialism.

Young members of the Socialist Party have produced this charter for discussion and debate. If you agree, join us in the fight for a future we can look forward to not fear – and that means fighting for a socialist alternative.



**Join the socialists today**  
[www.socialistparty.org.uk](http://www.socialistparty.org.uk)

# Pay, jobs and training

This capitalist crisis threatens mass unemployment and poverty for millions. Young people will be particularly hard hit. Unemployment among 18-24 year olds could hit a million by the end of 2020. But this is not inevitable. Make big business pay - not young people with our future. We fight for:

- **Opposition to all job cuts!** To defend workers' jobs and income, any company that declares redundancies or plant closures should be nationalised under democratic workers' control and management, with compensation to be paid to the former owners only on the basis of proven need. Open the books of companies threatening job cuts and closures to trade union scrutiny to plan how jobs and income can be protected.
- **No to poverty pay!** Trade union struggle for an immediate increase in the minimum wage to £12 an hour without exemptions as a step towards a real living wage of at least £15 an hour. Abolish youth rates with immediate effect. Link wages to the cost of living.
- **For job security and rights at work.** Scrap zero-hour contracts and end the super-exploitation of the gig economy. All workers to have trade union rates of pay, employment protection, and sickness and holiday rights from day one of employment.
- **Increase benefits** to the level of the national minimum wage, with no youth rates or delays in payment.
- **No to bogus apprenticeships or training schemes.** For a decent job guaranteed for all at the end of training.
- **The right to a job for all.** We fight for a massive government programme of investment in socially useful job creation, with trade union rates of pay, secure and stable hours, and with free training schemes for skilled work. Share out the work with no loss of pay.
- **A socialist green new deal!** A programme of mass public works based on investment and research in green and renewable energy. For democratic workers' control and trade union oversight of the transition to an environmentally sustainable economy, with green jobs and training available to all workers currently employed in the fossil fuel industry.
- **For trade union oversight and democratic members' control** of any public works, job creation programmes and youth training schemes to guarantee decent pay and conditions for all.
- **Take the wealth off the 1%.** Introduce an immediate 50% levy on the hoarded wealth of big business. Instead of bailing out big business with billions of pounds of taxpayers' money, we fight for a socialist government to take into public ownership the top 125 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. This is a step towards a democratic socialist plan for the economy based on meeting need - not prioritising big business profit.

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## Education

Education means being squeezed through a series of exam factories, with university either too expensive or leaving you with a lifetime of debt. We need a completely different kind of education model – one that offers everyone the chance to develop themselves. We fight for:

- **Free education!** Scrap university tuition fees, write off all student debt, and replace student loans with genuine living grants for all students in higher education and further education.
- **For publicly funded education! No cuts to jobs or services** on campus or in schools and colleges. The Higher Education funding crisis must not be paid for by staff and students. Take the wealth off the 1% to fully publicly fund education.
- **Kick big business out of education!** Reverse all outsourcing and marketisation of Higher Education. Take Higher Education fully into public ownership and run it democratically, including by campus staff and students. Bring schools under the democratic control of local authorities, with oversight from trade unions, pupils and parents.
- **A say in what we learn.** Open the national curriculum to the democratic collective oversight of teachers, pupils and parents.
- **For a fully funded, democratically run education system** which gives young people genuine opportunities to fulfil themselves in academic study and / or vocational study, linked to access for all to a well-paid and decent job or training.

# Housing and public services

Moving into your own home is a basic part of making your own life – but capitalism is not even able to offer that to many of us. Mental health services are barely existent after decades of cuts and privatisation. For working-class women, BAME, LGBT+ people, these cuts hit harder. We need services for all. If you're young and working class, where do you go when you're not in school or at work? We fight for:

- **Homes for all!** For councils to use their existing powers to introduce rent control with democratic oversight by the local community and trade unions. For a mass programme of council house regeneration and construction with trade union oversight of workplace safety and conditions. Take over the empty homes. No evictions.
- **For access to free quality public services.** For massive investment in all of our public services so everyone can access the support and help they need, from the NHS, to mental health, to domestic violence refuges, etc. End and reverse all privatisation and cuts.
- **For somewhere decent to go, and support.** Open new leisure centres, libraries, youth clubs, sports facilities, and careers services for college leavers, free at the point of use and fully publicly funded.
- **Councils to refuse to make cuts.** Councils should refuse to pass on Tory government cuts and build movements to demand that the funds are released by central government to provide the services we need.

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# Rights and oppression

Capitalism means racism, sexism, homophobia and other oppressions for millions. Our ability to organise and protest is also under attack. We fight to:

- **End discrimination** on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age, and all other forms of prejudice. For the building of a mass movement which unites all young and working-class people around a socialist programme to end oppression and austerity.
- **Defend the right to protest and strike.** Scrap the anti-trade union laws and the anti-democratic legislation.
- **End police harassment.** For the democratic accountability of the police overseen by local committees, made up of democratically elected representatives of trade unionists, local community organisations, young people and local authorities.
- **For the right to vote at 16.** We should have a say in how society is run. But we also need a political voice that represents the working class.

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# Environment

Wildfires, floods, droughts and other extreme weather events are becoming more and more frequent on the basis of runaway global warming. But despite all the warnings, big business continues its drive for profit at the expense of the environment. We fight for:

- **Taking transport into democratic public ownership.** For low-fare bus and train travel as part of a fully integrated and democratically planned public transport system. No cuts to student travel support.
- **Nationalising the energy companies, the big polluters, and privatised utilities,** alongside the top banks and monopolies, under democratic workers' control and management, with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need.
- **Socialist change** to democratically plan society in a way that protects people and the environment.



# For fighting organisations for young people

As individuals we can't take on the bosses, the government and the system. Our strength comes from when we struggle together. We say:

- **Join a union!** The best defence for workers is acting together. When collectively organised, workers can take strike action to shut down the workplaces – and with big enough numbers society as a whole - in order to fight back against the bosses and their political representatives. Get active in your union and fight for it to take the action necessary to defend workers' jobs and health and safety.
- **Students organise!** For the right of every school and college student to form and join a democratically organised students' union. Defend the right of students to protest.
- **Build fighting students' unions on the university campuses.** For a fighting national students' union to link the struggles of secondary school, FE and HE students across the country in a national fightback against austerity in education and for a future for young people.
- **Young workers organise!** For the establishment of a democratic and fighting youth section in every trade union. For youth representatives on shop stewards committees, and youth committees in Trades Councils locally. For the right of all apprentices and trainee workers to participate in union activities.

## Socialism

Capitalism has utterly failed to keep society safe during the coronavirus pandemic, and now threatens to plunge millions more into deeper poverty and unemployment as big business bosses and the Tories try to make us pay for the crisis of their system. The coronavirus has graphically demonstrated the burning need for a democratic plan of society's resources and the economy. We fight for:

- **The building of a mass democratic workers' party,** to draw together workers, young people, socialists, trade unionists and community activists to provide a fighting political alternative to the big business parties.
- **Socialist internationalism and working class solidarity.** For socialist cooperation and planning of the world's resources, not capitalist competition and chaos.
- **A democratic socialist plan of production and distribution** to meet the needs of the overwhelming majority in society and to provide a future for young workers. Nationalise the top 125 monopolies, banks and finance houses in Britain under democratic workers' control and management so we can make the decisions about what is needed. Compensation to be paid only on the basis of proven need.

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