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# FUND SERVICES NOT WAR

## BUILD THE SOCIALIST OPPOSITION TO STARMER



SCOTT JONES  
NEWHAM AND EAST LONDON SOCIALIST PARTY

**W**ar and carnage continues apace and the only thing changing is the escalating chaos and number of people being killed. Horror in the news is now a daily sight.

In its first financial year in power the Labour

government in Westminster is set to spend £57.1 billion on 'defence' - aka military spending and funding war. That's 4.5% more than even the Tories spent the previous year.

Meanwhile, working-class people hit by the two-child benefit cap or pensioners affected by the cut to winter fuel payments are ignored and demonised. Public sector workers who ask for their pay to keep up with the cost of living are told no and schools, the NHS and other services are underfunded.

Wars are only spreading and governments claim they need to spend more to wage them. But when Keir Starmer and Joe Biden send ships and jets to the Middle East, they

aren't concerned about ordinary people. They are concerned about protecting the strategic and profit interests of the bosses in their own countries. Capitalist competition only stokes division as well as hoarding and squandering resources, leaving us to fight over the scraps.

The world is increasingly chaotic and riven by conflict, and a section of the capitalist class profits from the destruction and devastation. Increased arms spending won't make the world any safer. The people of Gaza, Lebanon and elsewhere will still be bombed and killed, but it will make a few super-rich bosses wealthier.

What all this money sloshing around does show is that there is money for the alternative. An alternative that meets the needs of all and building a world free from war and poverty. Big businesses and the banks that dominate the economy should be nationalised under democratic workers' control and management, the arms industry too. A democratic plan, drawn up by the working class, could ensure the needs of all are met, including protecting the environment.

**We need to fight for a socialist world. Join the Socialist Party to get involved fighting for a socialist future.**

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# One year of horror, escalation, and regional war brings hundreds of thousands to protest



OSCAR PARRY  
SOUTH WEST LONDON SOCIALIST PARTY

The escalating war in the Middle East, and the prospect of a full-scale conflict in the region, meant that more protesters were at the national anti-war demonstration on 5 October in central London – some protesting for the first time. The march had hundreds of thousands of people on it, with coaches travelling from all over the country.

Socialist Party members participated in the demonstration, our Socialist paper, leaflets, and our new placards emblazoned with our slogan: “Build mass workers’ action to stop the war, end Israeli state terror”.

Socialist Party campaign stalls along the route were completely swamped with protesters who wanted to find out more about how to get involved, and to attend Socialist Party meetings in their area.

Many were especially interested in our campaign for a new mass workers’ party, based on the trade unions. That could challenge Starmer and all the other pro-capitalist politicians, who continue to materially support the Israeli state, while hypocritically calling for a ceasefire, taking no concrete steps to make this a reality.

The fact that these anti-war demonstrations of working-class people across society have continued to be tens of thousands strong

throughout the year of war, and that this was even bigger, shows just how far removed from widespread public opinion Starmer and his allies are.

Socialist Students had a lively contingent on the demonstration, with many students who have recently joined from the freshers’ fairs joining the bloc on the march. A group of students travelled from Aberystwyth in mid Wales on a seven-hour coach down to London to join the demonstration. Many young people are now drawing the conclusion that capitalism is a system that breeds endless war and poverty, and are enthusiastically joining the fight for a socialist world.

## Model trade union motion

This [union organisation] condemns the brutal assault by the Israeli government and military in Gaza, the West Bank and now Lebanon.

This is causing a humanitarian disaster, with over 40,000 killed in Gaza alone and at least 16,000 children dead. Many more tens of thousands have been injured and are missing.

It is estimated that up to 1.7 million people in Gaza have been displaced, out of a population of 2.23 million.

The bombardment of Lebanon, along with a land invasion, now brings war to that country with a rising death toll and 1.2 million displaced, and threatens a wider regional war with many more casualties.

This [union organisation] notes the support being given to the right-wing Israeli regime by US imperialism and a number of Western capitalist powers, including the UK.

This [union organisation] condemns the backing given by Sir Keir Starmer’s Labour government. This includes operation of military resources and the sale and supply of arms and logistics.

This [union organisation] believes that the continuing aggression of Netanyahu’s government is a clear threat to the security and lives of millions of working-class and poor people throughout the Middle East, including in Israel.

In Israel, a general strike against the Netanyahu government took place on 2 September, calling for a ceasefire in Gaza and a deal to return Israeli hostages. This following a pre-war mass movement and general strike against the government’s drive to curb the judiciary.

This [union organisation] calls on our union to: demand that the Starmer-led Labour government immediately withdraws support, both military and otherwise, from the Netanyahu-led Israeli regime and halts the sale and supply of weapons, logistics and financial aid to it

- contacts the group of independent MPs convened by Jeremy Corbyn and the seven suspended Labour MPs to discuss how to oppose the UK government’s policy in the Middle East

- with the rest of the trade union movement, play a central role in the anti-war movement, including in the building of demonstrations

- convene a meeting of union reps in the arms and logistics sectors to discuss the war in the Middle East and support our members in the arms and logistics sectors who refuse to take part in work operations that are supplying the Israeli government

- demand the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza, the West Bank, east Jerusalem and Lebanon. For an independent, socialist Palestinian state, alongside a socialist Israel, with guaranteed rights for all minorities, as part of the struggle for a socialist Middle East

## Socialist Party WHAT WE THINK

On Saturday 5 October 2024, the Socialist Party took part in the biggest anti-war demonstration since the first months of the onslaught on Gaza, marching on 10 Downing Street, the New Labour prime minister Keir Starmer’s residence. The marchers’ need to make their voices heard against the nightmarish events taking place in the Middle East had not been in anyway lessened because Britain now has a Labour government.

After a year of unimaginable horror meted out against the Palestinians, Lebanon is now also under ferocious assault, already resulting in over 2,000 deaths and 1.2 million people being forced from their homes.

Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu is increasingly hated by the majority of Israelis. A general strike took place against his government just last month. However, by claiming that the war on Lebanon will bring peace to northern Israel, he has been able to temporarily shore up his base and gain support for the escalation across much of Israeli society. It won’t last. This latest horrific attack will do nothing to help the Israeli population to be able to live in peace and security. On the contrary, it has brought the whole region to the edge of a full-scale war. Even if this time the tinder box of the Middle East somehow avoids being entirely engulfed in flames, the current conflict will only prepare the ground for the next cycle of violence.

### What way out?

What power offers a way out of the horror for the peoples of the Middle East? Certainly not US imperialism, still the strongest capitalist power on the planet, which continues to defend and arm Israel, even while pleading with Netanyahu to show restraint. Nor the Arab regimes which, while paying lip-service to the Palestinians’ plight, have in reality stood aside over the last year. They are interested only in maintaining their own rule and defending the wealth and power of their elites. Equally, the Iranian theocratic dictatorship cares only about preserving its own rule and prestige.

In fact, the one thing that unites the opposing powers in this conflict is a deep-seated fear of awakenings the currently sleeping giant that could bring them all down: the working class and poor. That is the one power capable of bringing peace to the region. Democratically elected workers’ governments would be able to harness the wealth and resources of the region to meet the needs of all, and to negotiate solutions that would meet the national aspirations of all the peoples of the Middle East.

The Arab and north African uprisings fourteen years ago felled dictators and are seared into the memories of all the ruling elites and the imperialist powers. It’s true that neither the theocratic regime in Iran nor Israel’s government were directly affected by the ‘Arab Spring’, although it had an echo in the movement over housing

# Ethical pensions? Don’t trust the profit-seeking bosses

BARTON WICKETS  
ENFIELD AND LEA VALLEY SOCIALIST PARTY

With Starmer’s cuts to winter fuel payments, it’s clear that the financial security of pensioners is at risk. It led me, in my thirties, to take more of an interest in my own retirement plans.

Despite our contributions to National Insurance, the reality is that the state pension alone (currently £221.20 a week) is unlikely to be sufficient for a comfortable retirement. Many of us will need to rely on additional government support or other pension schemes in order to retire.

The issue of workplace pensions creates a dilemma for someone looking to make sure investments are ethical. Many of us are actively fighting through our trade unions for fair wages and better pensions. However, many workplace pension schemes

are invested in companies that actively work against working-class interests.

For example, my employer offers nearly 30 different pension schemes managed by a single asset management company. At first glance, several appear ethical, featuring labels like “Sustainable,” “Low Carbon,” or “Environmental Social Governance”. However, a closer examination reveals that these funds often support projects like airport expansions, weapons manufacturers, fossil fuel suppliers, and even British tobacco. This was concerning to say the least.

According to the Financial Conduct Authority Financial Lives Survey in 2022, 81% of adults in the UK want their pension investments to have a positive impact as well as provide financial returns. It’s hard to believe that many would consider investing

in union-busting corporations that undermine workers’ rights, manufacture weapons or harm the environment as a positive contribution.

### £3 trillion

Pension funds are worth an estimated £3 trillion in the UK. It was reported earlier this summer that the UK’s largest pension fund, the university ‘USS’ scheme sold off £80 million of its assets linked to Israel, under pressure from its members’ anger, expressed by the university workers’ union UCU, over the Israeli state’s war on Gaza.

I raised the issue in my trade union branch to see if any other members had thought further about where our investments are going. Most people hadn’t really thought about it. Why do we trust ‘asset management companies’ to decide where and how to

invest our pensions savings?

The USS scheme is also the largest investor in Thames Water which faces imminent government bailout. Hardly expert risk-free investment!

Instead, we should have control over where our pension wealth is invested, with the democratic involvement of our trade unions. That would mean taking the vast pensions wealth out of the hands of the capitalists and nationalising under democratic workers’ control and management.

Then the working-class could democratically decide how and where to invest in the interests of all and the environment, not for profit. This would be an important step towards a fairer socialist society where the retirement age could be reduced to 55 and a genuine living state pension available for all.

# STARMER’S LABOUR BACKS WAR AND SLAUGHTER

## Build the socialist opposition



PHOTO: PAUL MATTESON

costs in Israel later in 2011. However, both have since been repeatedly shaken by huge movements, graphically demonstrating the shallowness of the social bases they rest on.

Right now, amidst the current carnage, the masses of the Middle East have not yet made their strength felt, but they are certain to do so again. The Arab Spring will prove to be the prelude to even more powerful movements. To successfully end war, national oppression and poverty will require the working class in the different countries creating their own parties, with a programme for the socialist transformation of society.

Capitalism offers no way forward for the peoples of the Middle East or internationally. Bloody wars and conflicts are an inevitable consequence of this increasingly barbarous system, which is driven by the lust for profit, not the needs of humanity.

What does this mean for the anti-war movement in Britain? Inevitably,

many of those who have taken to the streets against the onslaught on Gaza over the last year feel powerless, as the nightmare facing the Palestinians continues, seemingly unendingly. There are no short-term easy answers. Just, as in the Middle East, to build an anti-war movement that can permanently end the horror of war means building a movement to overthrow capitalism and start to create a democratic socialist society.

### Anti-war movements

Nonetheless, mass anti-war movements in any one country can force that country’s government to withdraw all support for the present Israeli regime’s aggression, if they are built to a high enough level. The last year has shown that we are not powerless, far from it. The attempts of the last Tory government to demonise the anti-war movement failed miserably, and then home secretary Suella Braverman was sacked as a result. Just four months ago, the

hated Tories were finally booted out of office. Of course, marchers on 5 October were absolutely right to conclude that nothing fundamental has changed with Labour in government. Like previous Tory governments, Starmer’s Labour acts in the interests of British capitalism not the working class and poor – either in Britain or internationally.

Still, under the pressure of the anti-war movement, a few of the crimes of Rishi Sunak’s government have been reversed. Britain’s threatened objection to the International Criminal Court’s issuing an arrest warrant for Netanyahu was dropped, and funding for UNRWA (the UN relief agency for Palestinians) was reinstated. At the same time, 30 out of 350 arms export licences for selling goods to Israel were suspended, a measure condemned as “shameful” by Netanyahu. These are very minor measures. Nonetheless, Starmer would not have sanctioned them without the power of the anti-war movement,

and in particular the punishment Labour received, primarily by voters from a Muslim background, at the general election, resulting in the election of five anti-war independents, including Jeremy Corbyn.

But, in essence, Starmer’s New Labour government is acting as a loyal sidekick to US imperialism, echoing Biden’s position on all the major issues. Last month, when the UN General Assembly voted to call on Israel to “end its unlawful presence in the occupied territory”, Britain abstained. Militarily, Britain is a bit-part player compared to the US, summed up by the RAF’s Typhoon jets scrambling to help intercept the Iranian missiles fired at Israel on 1 October, but being too slow and ill-equipped to play any role in bringing the barrage down. But while Britain is increasingly a third-rate power, it remains one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, and the sixth biggest economy and military force on the planet. It is very useful for US imperialism that Britain’s government loyally toes its line.

For contrast, just imagine if Jeremy Corbyn had been the Labour prime minister. The determination of the capitalist class to remove him from the Labour leadership was because he could not be relied upon to act in their interests, at home or in foreign policy. For example, they feared he might have gone to the UN and attacked the warmongers and the elites, and that in turn would have inspired workers and young people in Britain and globally into action against them.

Unfortunately, the Corbynite wing of the Labour Party did not mobilise against the attacks of the pro-capitalists within Labour in the way they could and should have done, instead attempting to compromise with the right at each stage. The result was their defeat within Labour and the pro-capitalist Starmer as Labour prime minister.

There are many lessons of that experience that will be important for the tasks that the working class has ahead. One of the most important is to remember how frightened the capitalist class was by Corbynism. That wasn’t because they feared the man himself, but rather they were terrified of the mass movement of workers and young people that he could have inspired – and which could have threatened their rule.

Their fear showed that the capitalist class understands the potential power of the working class to transform society. A first step to turning that potential power into a reality – here as in the countries of the Middle East – is the building of a new workers’ party.

In the general election four months ago, it was mainly voters from a Muslim background – furious at Starmer’s stance on Gaza – who expressed their anger at the ballot box by voting for anti-war candidates. That is an important starting point, but for a new workers’ party to start to successfully challenge the capitalist elite it will need to reach out to other sections of the working class. However, Starmer’s pro-capitalist austerity mark II policies are already angering every section of the working class. The potential to start building a new party, based on the organised working-class, with a socialist programme against austerity, war and national oppression, is clear. If you agree – join the Socialist Party.

RMT: Rail workers beat off attacks on terms and conditions – but must be prepared to fight further attacks

RMT MEMBER ON WEST MIDLANDS TRAINS

RMT union members at Train Operating Companies (TOCs) have voted to accept the government's pay offer of 4.75% and 4.5% for 2023 and 2024 respectively...

99% of members voted to accept on a turnout of 81%. From the very beginning of the dispute in spring 2022, RMT members have engaged with the ballot process in big numbers...

25 days of strike action later and we have now reached the end of the dispute. So what have we achieved?

The below-inflation 5% (or £1,750 if greater) that we received for 2022, and 4.75% for 2023, still leaves us worse off in real terms than we were in 2021.

But the Tory government's position on our pay rise (the Tory offer was 4% for 2023) was that they wanted it to be paid for through 'productivity', i.e. selling off hard-won terms and conditions...

Strike action gets results

RMT members should remember that the settlement was delivered as a result of rail unions taking strike action, not because of a supposedly worker-friendly Labour government...

It is clear by the overwhelming vote to accept, on the recommendation of the leadership, that members feel that there is no more to be gained through strike action at this point.

This now opens up a new era for the RMT and the wider trade union movement. With Labour in office, some will hope that we might finally be leaving the dark period under the Tories behind...

clear that they intend to press ahead with their austerity plans. An additional threat is posed by the establishment of Great British Railways (GBR)...

If any proof was needed of our willingness to fight back, you only need to refer to the magnificent vote for action by London Underground members in defence of jobs, pay and conditions...

Furthermore, it is not yet clear that Labour has ruled out allowing private companies to run operations, despite nationalising the TOCs as the contracts expire. Their programme for local bus services clearly indicates that they are happy in principle to contract out bus operations to the same profiteering private firms as before...

We have managed to stave off the attacks on our industry for now and we should be proud of ourselves and our campaign. However, we must remain prepared to fight in defence of our interests as the new government begins to establish the new railway regime over the next few years...

remain prepared to fight in defence of our interests as the new government begins to establish the new railway regime over the next few years. If any proof was needed of our willingness to fight back, you only need to refer to the magnificent vote for action by London Underground members in defence of jobs, pay and conditions...

If we are going to be able to both protect jobs and correct our wages, which have been driven down by inflation over the last few years, it will require a militant struggle both industrially and politically. The RMT must place clear demands on Labour, but should pose those demands to the independent and suspended MPs too - the RMT supported Jeremy Corbyn's re-election as an independent, and in putting our demands to those independents and the suspended Labour MPs we could speed up the development of a bloc of MPs that fights in workers' interests.

Massive vote for strike action on London Underground

GARY HARBORD SECRETARY, LU TRAIN GRADES, PERSONAL CAPACITY

RMT members on London Underground have voted overwhelmingly in favour of strike action in our ballot over pay. 96% of our members voted for strike action on an increased turnout. Significantly, RMT's membership on London Underground has increased by over 400 since we won an extra £30 million in the last pay round...

This proves that when a strong combative lead is given, workers will respond. We have a Labour London mayor, Sadiq Khan, and a new Labour government. And yet London Underground's latest offer is 4% this year and 1.6%-2.0% next year, way short of our members' aspirations, and less than has been offered on Network Rail and the Train Operating Companies...

The company is also intent on implementing pay bands, or "pay families" in management speak! The pay families would allow management to cap pay rises for whatever types of job they choose, meaning that annual pay rises in future would not apply to those members. This proposal from Transport for London and London Underground threatens the right of members to have their pay negotiated by RMT.

In addition, those already in banded pay grades would not get individual pay rises once they have reached the top of their respective pay band. RMT on London Underground will continue to resist these attacks on our pay, terms and conditions, and ensure a fair deal for our members.

As we go to press, a mass meeting of reps was taking place to discuss the next steps. The company is also intent on implementing pay bands, or "pay families" in management speak! The pay families would allow management to cap pay rises for whatever types of job they choose, meaning that annual pay rises in future would not apply to those members. This proposal from Transport for London and London Underground threatens the right of members to have their pay negotiated by RMT.

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University workers need to fight 'paltry' pay offer Demand full public funding



MARY FINCH UNISON REP, PERSONAL CAPACITY

Higher education workers have been offered another paltry pay increase of just £1,200. The pay offer is being imposed - but it is reported that as many as 20 universities are 'deferring' the payment!

In a consultation, 79.6% of Unison members voted to reject the offer, so now we will be balloted for strike action. Unison represents workers in professional services - everything from admissions and administration to cleaning and security. Together with the University and College Union (UCU), we have the power to completely shut universities.

In 2022, Unison held its first national strike for around a decade, coordinated with UCU. Unison branches at just 16 universities took action (because the ballot was disaggregated by university and most areas didn't make it over the Tory anti-union ballot threshold), but this was a massive boost to members' confidence and won a better pay increase. Members were offered 3% - well below inflation, but double the previous year's rise of 1.5%.

That means that campaigning for a 'yes' vote must be linked to a serious industrial and political strategy - putting demands on Starmer's Labour for full public funding - in which members have democratic control of the dispute at every stage. Bold and coordinated strike action can achieve further gains on pay, and other issues such as workload and pay gaps. Unison nationally could campaign to recruit new members and galvanise existing branches, bringing more universities out on strike. The sector is in crisis, and the only solution so far offered by the bosses and Starmer's Labour is punishing students with higher tuition fees. The unions can offer a way forward for workers and students by fighting for free, publicly funded and democratically run education.

Coordinate

Bold and coordinated strike action can achieve further gains on pay, and other issues such as workload and pay gaps. Unison nationally could campaign to recruit new members and galvanise existing branches, bringing more universities out on strike. The sector is in crisis, and the only solution so far offered by the bosses and Starmer's Labour is punishing students with higher tuition fees. The unions can offer a way forward for workers and students by fighting for free, publicly funded and democratically run education.

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UCU MEMBERS ADD: In UCU there will be a consultative ballot over whether to take strike action over pay. The Union's Higher Education Committee has rejected the pay award, but accepted the non-pay elements of the offer, agreeing to enter further talks on casualisation and workload.

action over pay. The Union's Higher Education Committee has rejected the pay award, but accepted the non-pay elements of the offer, agreeing to enter further talks on casualisation and workload.

Vote 'yes'

Delivering a resounding 'yes' vote is possible. Members know the offer is not enough and we will not be able to get more without a fight. But at a recent branch delegates meeting, there were also reservations voiced about whether more can be won. These reservations are partly a response to the university funding crisis, which at the sharp end is contributing to job losses. Members are also affected by the experience of recent disputes being mishandled by the UCU leadership.

That means that campaigning for a 'yes' vote must be linked to a serious industrial and political strategy - putting demands on Starmer's Labour for full public funding - in which members have democratic control of the dispute at every stage.

Join the fightback

Socialist Party members campaigning for fighting, democratic trade unions, wherever possible working alongside others, to campaign for the industrial and political strategies workers need

JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

- Visit socialistparty.org.uk/join or call 020 8988 8777 or text your name and postcode to 07761 818 206 to find out more today!

SUPPORT STAFF UNIONS: WE NEED MAXIMUM UNITY, NOT DIVISION

This statement has been published by Unison and National Education Union (NEU) executive members

The Labour-led Local Government Association (LGA) has refused to move on its pay offer to over a million council workers and school support staff, despite the new Labour government offering higher pay awards to teachers and health workers. The offer of £1,290 (less for part-timers) will mean less than 5% for many thousands of council workers and as low as 2.5% for some.

The LGA has admitted that for the lowest paid - who will see pay awards of between 5% and 7% - it still means that their pay will 30% below the Trades Union Congress (TUC)'s call for £15-an-hour minimum wage. Not only does the pay award not match the pay awards given to others, it does nothing to address the massive loss of pay over the last decade of over 20%.

In light of this, we welcome the decision of Unison, Unite and NEU to ballot their members for strike action to win a just pay rise that is properly funded.

What is clear is that for the action to be effective we need maximum unity and coordination between the unions to ensure that the action is as strong as possible.

It will therefore come as a shock to many Unison, Unite and NEU members that, instead of promoting the unity of all local authority workers, Unison, Unite and GMB have instead again chosen to lodge

a complaint to the TUC against the NEU, threatening the unity needed.

Why? Because the NEU wishes to discuss collaboration, and ballot its school support staff members alongside Unison and Unite, having won a massive strike vote in its indicative ballot.

Unison, Unite and GMB claim that the NEU has breached the decision of the TUC last year, effectively claiming that because the NEU is not a recognised union on the National Joint Council (NJC) that it does not have the right to ballot and fight for its members. The logic of that position is that Unison and Unite would rather have NEU support staff members working on days that Unison and Unite are on strike, undermining the action.

Instead of taking measures against the NEU, Unison and Unite members would want to see a major joint campaign of action, not only for the pay rise but also to demand the funding to pay for it.

We need maximum unity not division.

Therefore, we call on Unison and Unite to drop their complaint to the TUC and support the NEU's wish to join the action in pursuit of the joint pay claim.

We appeal to all unions that a joint meeting of Unison, Unite and NEU national and sectoral executives be urgently set up to resolve the issue.

- Signed, in a personal capacity: April Ashley, Unison National Executive Council; Hugo Pierre, Unison Local Government Service Group Executive Committee; Sheila Caffrey, National Education Union National Executive; Louise Cuffaro, National Education Union National Executive

Members of unions that organise support staff can scan here to add your name



The ballots for action of Unison and Unite members in local government - including school support staff - run until 16 and 15 October respectively



ALSTAIR TICE SHEFFIELD SOCIALIST PARTY

After seven weeks of solid strike action, Unite members at Veolia refuse depot in Sheffield are confident of winning union recognition. Their solidarity and determination, with 30-40 on the picket line every day, combined with Unite's leverage campaign, has forced Veolia national management to the table. Unite organisers took their banners to the Paris headquarters of

Veolia, a multinational company, and parked their giant inflatable rat outside the house of one of the company's directors!

Unite has suspended its leverage campaign and protests to facilitate negotiations, which began last week. But the strike continues into its eighth week, with members currently rebalancing for another six-month strike mandate, if required.

The GMB union currently has sole recognition. We know that many of the GMB union members working

in the depot support Unite's right to recognition, which hopefully will reunite the workforce and put the trade unions in a stronger position to take on what is a very bullying and victimising local management.

Socialist Party members, who have supported the strikers since day one, argue that the outsourced waste management contract should be taken back in-house by Sheffield City Council, and run democratically by the workers and community.

RMT on strike in 2022 PAUL MATTISSON



Why we are striking at York microbiology services: 'We just can't give any more'

A STRIKING UNITE MEMBER AT YORK HOSPITAL SPOKE TO THE SOCIALIST

For as long as anyone within our department can remember, senior management have talked about moving the microbiology laboratory in Scarborough to York. Raac concrete was found in the roof at Scarborough and this sped up the closure.

When the lab closed in October, there was no plan for how the on-call and urgent sample service for microbiology in Scarborough would be managed.

York staff were promised that 20 staff members would move to York. We got two medical lab assistants (MLAs), and two full-time and

part-time biomedical scientists (BMSs), one of whom has never been provided with training so can't actually work within the laboratory!

York's workload has doubled and we have lost a large number of trained team members. Recruitment is underway, but we don't have enough fully trained staff left at any grade to provide training quickly and without skimping, leaving partially trained people to work alone. It takes a minimum of 12 months to get someone ready for on-call work if all training is in place.

The BMS team has been running an on-call service that should have 16 people with eight, and are dangerously exhausted. Meanwhile,

management gave the MLA team less than one week's notice that they would begin working extended days, and there were insufficient staff to man the roster at a sensible frequency. None of the MLA team have fully completed their training.

Shifts have been covered by volunteers on goodwill for the last three years, but the goodwill has run dry as the team is exhausted and there is no end in sight. We have serious concerns about patient safety - an exhausted team will begin to make errors as they rush through work to try and keep the service afloat.

Scarborough microbiology is currently being run by three scientists. This should never have continued

for more than a few weeks. Scarborough blood sciences teams are being asked to learn how to process and report microbiology samples, outside of their usual scope of practice. No additional staffing has been provided to support this, and training has still not been completed a year after the Scarborough lab closed. The microbiology service is being led from one crisis to the next. It's all a huge mess. Staff are upset, exhausted and have no trust in the senior management team. The staff just can't give any more.

Strike action has taken place on 30 September, 7 and 11 October

Get all the latest union news national shop stewards network NSSN bulletin: shopstewards.net

DO THE TRADE UNIONS NEED TO FIGHT UNDER LABOUR? Come and discuss at SOCIALISM 2024 London, 9-10 November tickets and info at socialism.org.uk

# WILL STARMER'S LABOUR GOVERNMENT MEET ITS CLIMATE PLEDGES?

STEVE SCORE AND ALEX GILLHAM  
LEICESTER SOCIALIST PARTY

The climate crisis is worsening, and measures to tackle it both in Britain and internationally are failing to reach targets. At the same time, the energy price crisis has massively hiked up the cost of living for millions.

The 2016 Paris Agreement, signed by 196 nations, outlined that global greenhouse gas emissions must decline by 43% by 2030 to limit catastrophic global warming. In response to an escalating crisis, Labour has promised "zero-carbon electricity" by 2030 in its "change" manifesto, under the headline "Make Britain a clean energy superpower".

The manifesto promises to cut bills, achieve energy independence, create 650,000 new high-quality jobs in the green energy sector, enable warmer homes to slash fuel poverty and force water companies to clean up rivers.

Already, less than 100 days into the Labour government, energy companies have been given permission to raise our bills and more than 2,000 jobs have been cut at Tata Steel in Port Talbot, cynically using climate as a cover for offshoring steel production. More jobs are under threat at Scunthorpe steelworks, and at the Grangemouth petrochemical plant in Scotland too.

### Energy profits

One of the key planks of Labour's plan is to set up a new public energy company, Great British Energy, which will focus on clean energy generation. Created to invest in solar, wind and hydropower technology, Labour is promising an £8.3 billion investment over five years for the project. It will in fact be tiny (£1.66 billion a year) compared to the overall size of the industry.

UK Energy, the trade association for the UK energy industry, says £149 billion in economic activity annually



Less than 100 days into the Labour government, energy companies have been given permission to raise our bills and more than 2,000 jobs have been cut at Tata Steel

is generated through the energy sector and supply chain. BP alone made £11 billion in profit in 2023. It made double that at the height of the energy crisis in 2022. Shell made £22.3 billion in 2023. Those profits and the oil giants' huge capital largely untouched, GB Energy is definitely not nationalisation of the energy industry!

Narratives woven by both the then Tory government and the mainstream capitalist media blamed the energy crisis squarely on the Ukraine-Russia war which broke out in February 2022. While the conflict did see an extreme, short-term impact on energy bills with the closing of the Nord Stream pipelines, the cost of heating homes continues to rise two and a half years later, with energy price cap increases in October 2024 and expected in January 2025. At the same time, Labour is taking away heating allowance from pensioners, other than those on pension credit.

The truth is that blame for the long-term energy crisis does not fall totally at Putin's feet. Both the Tory and now Labour governments are avoiding the blame for their reliance on the failing private sector for energy. A lack of regulation around the energy market has led to outrageous price gouging, which has seen a total lack of government intervention. Over 6 million households in the UK now live in fuel poverty, where workers and pensioners must make the devastating decision to 'heat or eat'.

### Great British Energy

Prior to the manifesto, Labour had promised a £28 billion investment into a "green prosperity plan". They later reneged on this, apparently not wanting to look like they were somehow going on a spending spree. The promised amount of state funding into GB Energy is a fraction of the original pledge. Government spending restrictions are being prioritised over clean energy, better air quality and lower bills.

55% of Brits are in favour of energy renationalisation, according to a 2022 YouGov survey, only 10% are in favour of a private energy sector. With Jeremy Corbyn as leader, Labour had pledged to renationalise the big-six energy suppliers and the National Grid. Those policies were promptly ditched under Starmer to be replaced by "partnership between the public and private sectors" in the form of GB



Youth climate strikes in 2019  
PAUL MATTSSON

Energy, which will compete alongside private energy providers.

Labour will also create a new £7.3 billion 'National Wealth Fund', which will aim to encourage private investment in green projects. This was announced with the vague expectation that they will get £3 of private money for every £1 of state investment.

Chancellor Rachel Reeves is quoted as saying that the fund would act as a "concierge service for investors and businesses that want to invest in Britain". This is meant to be directed to ports, gigafactories (industrial units using renewable electricity), steel and hydrogen.

There is in fact already a similar institution brought into existence by the Tories called the UK Infrastructure Bank that was meant to "tackle climate change and support regional and local economic growth". Given the low levels of private investment that exist, lower than in any other G7 country as a percentage of GDP, how is that investment going to start flowing?

Labour has also added, to much fanfare, a pledged £21.7 billion planned investment in carbon capture and storage technology (CCS), something big fossil fuel companies have been lobbying for. This is still a modest sum in relation to the levels of investment in green energy needed, and even more modest when considered that this is spread over 20 years. The last Tory government had promised £20 billion in March 2023.

The planned CCS investment is really an acknowledgment that carbon generating electricity production will continue, only that the new, not very widely tested technology will pump CO<sub>2</sub> emissions into empty oil and gas wells under the North Sea rather than the atmosphere.

### Investment

In the run-up to the budget, there has been speculation that the government will rewrite the fiscal rules, which it enthusiastically adopted from the Tories. Not in terms of day-to-day spending on services, which

they still plan to cut, but in terms of long-term capital investment. In the face of government debt now at 100% of GDP - the highest level since the 1960s - they may use accounting sleight of hand, such as moving the National Wealth Fund and GB Energy off the government books, or excluding the Bank of England's losses over its reversal of quantitative easing. Either way, on the basis of the government's approach, there still will not be sufficient investment to solve the environmental crisis.

The scale of investment needed to combat climate change is huge, with vast investment in solar, wind, geothermal and hydropower required. Not only is green energy cleaner, but also much cheaper, so companies have little incentive to invest in green energy for profit.

Only a socialist programme can provide a real transition to green energy that would slow the devastation of climate change. It would start with nationalisation of the entire energy industry under democratic workers'

control and should include the producers, suppliers and distribution, such as the National Grid. This nationalisation has to be without compensation to the main super-rich owners, but with compensation only on the basis of proven need to small shareholders.

The existing wealth the current super-rich industry owners have amassed over many years of price gouging could be used to both hold down prices and invest in a rapid transition to carbon-free energy that both safeguards and creates new jobs within the sector. But it would need to go further and take the key industries out of private hands to prioritise environmentally sound methods, and allow planning to be democratically controlled by the working class as a whole.

### Transport and housing

Transport is also only vaguely alluded to in the energy section of the Labour manifesto despite being a huge factor in a green energy transition.



Only a socialist programme can provide a real transition to green energy that would slow the devastation of climate change. It would start with nationalisation of the entire energy industry under democratic workers' control

Road travel accounts for 91% of all domestic transport emissions. Huge, centrally planned investment would be required to upgrade and build rail travel, alongside a real renationalisation of the railways.

Bus travel is also a key factor in public transport, and a massively expanded, free-to-use electric bus network is needed to help us rely less on cars for transport. Again, this requires the full renationalisation of public transport.

Not only is a huge house building programme needed, but construction must be done with sustainability in mind. The private construction sector is currently shockingly wasteful, generating 62% of total UK waste. This can be tackled by focusing on 'deconstruction' methods which salvage valuable materials from demolished builds, a focus on low-carbon building materials, and worker-led project planning that doesn't focus on for-profit cost-cutting and creates high-quality social housing built to last, and to the maximum environmental and safety standards.

### Green jobs

One key issue of contention, particularly with the trade unions, is that of jobs. For example, Labour has said that it would not issue new licences for exploration of more oil and gas reserves in the North Sea, although it will maintain existing licences.

Sharon Graham, general secretary of Unite the Union, compares what might happen in communities dependant on North Sea oil and gas jobs to what happened to mining communities after the mass closure of coal mines in the 1980s. She says: "You cannot offset people's concerns with some vague reference to job creation". Many workers will not trust the government's promises of future green jobs. Unite calls for "no ban without a plan".

What is needed is a cast-iron

guarantee of alternative jobs for anyone whose job disappears because of the shift to renewable energy and a green economy, and jobs that are at least on the same terms and conditions as now. But that can only be guaranteed by public ownership. The parallel exists now with Tata Steel, which is shifting its steel production away from the UK using the guise of a 'green transition'. The alternative proposals of Unite have been rejected by a company only interested in profit. That's why the Socialist Party has called for nationalisation to preserve jobs while carrying out that transition.

### Who pays?

Many workers fear that the cost of green policies in general will be billed to them, with some justification. For example, the various schemes to charge car users introduced in many areas, supposedly to discourage car use, but more as a fundraising exercise. At the same time, public transport is in crisis and faces cuts.

When energy prices are rising, everyone has been aware of vast profits being made by energy suppliers. While control of these things is in the hands of those big companies, it's no wonder many don't believe they wouldn't end up shouldering the cost.

Unprepared to seriously challenge the oil and gas giants' profits and domination over the energy industry, Labour will not be able to meet its climate pledges, themselves insufficient to stop and reverse catastrophic climate change.

In Britain, and on an international basis, capitalism is incapable of successfully dealing with the climate crisis, because competing companies and nation states will always put short-term profits ahead of the long-term needs of society and the climate. The fight to oppose climate change cannot be separated from the fight for socialist change.

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# Hull unions mobilise to stop far right

## Jobs and homes, not racism

### HULL SOCIALIST PARTY

In August, far-right activists organised a rally, looting, and rioting in Hull, directing people against migrants staying at the Royal Hotel and the main immigrant area of Hull, around Spring Bank. The far right played on anger about the removal of pensioners' heating allowance and poverty, mixed with their lies that all the problems people face come from illegal migrants struggling to cross the Channel.

Hull and District Trades Union Council responded by starting a campaign under the banner 'Jobs and homes, not racism'. This was to target the seedbed of racism, which is poverty.

We recognised that it was not good enough just to wag our finger at people with far-right ideas. Rather, we had to put forward a political programme of hope, based on improving the conditions of workers of all communities.

A section of the far right were emboldened by the August riots, and called a follow up rally in Hull for 5 October. The trades council called a counter-rally, and succeeded in preventing the far right from repeating their carnage.

It was not a complete victory, however. The far right had set up nearly four hours before their rally. And the police, under the guise of 'neutrality', argued that they had a democratic right to protest.

We outnumbered the far right, and were able to use a more powerful sound system to mostly drown them

out. We were able to set up on the steps of the plinth, which the far right wanted to use.

### Far right demoralised

There is no doubt at the end that the far right were demoralised. Whereas those attending our rally felt buoyed by the protest.

The organisers and speakers, including many Socialist Party members, deserve a huge round of applause.

Some were worried that attending the anti-racist protest could lead to violence, court appearances, and prison. The trades council did a brilliant job stewarding our demonstration to protect it from far-right provocation.

Demonstrators going home commented that they felt safe. We also made sure that protestors were not left on their own to go home, where they could have been attacked by far-right activists.

One or two protesters thought that we could have used our larger size to run the far right off the plinth. Had it been just us and them, this could have happened.

However, there was a huge police presence, which stood between us and the far right. Had we attempted to push the far right, the police would have intervened, and there would have been arrests. We had to weigh up what we would have gained, with what we would have lost.

This will not be the last time the far right attempt to pollute the streets of Hull. We need to be ready for them. Our campaign needs to be stepped up in our trade unions and working-class communities.



Socialist Party member Kevin Pattison addresses the counter-demo, as trade union stewards protect speakers and protesters from far-right provocation IAIN DALTON

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THE CASE FOR  
A TRADE UNION  
COMMUNITY  
DEFENCE STEWARDS  
ORGANISATION**

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## Stop St Mungo's no-fault evictions

### ST MUNGO'S WORKER

"The number of people falling into homelessness continues to rise... we hope these statistics will galvanise policy action to bring in the Renters Reform Bill and abolish Section 21 evictions; a detrimental clause which currently allows landlords to evict tenants without reason" – Emma Haddad, CEO of St Mungo's homelessness charity and housing association.

Commonly called 'no-fault eviction', a Section 21 notice instructs tenants to leave the property. No reason is required, and very little notice, as little as two months. 92,000 eviction notices like this have been issued since 2019. Over 28,000 were actually evicted – a major cause of homelessness.

What the CEO did not say is that St Mungo's itself uses Section 21 notices! Unite the Union reps have challenged management about this practice on behalf of staff, but were brushed off.

Management said that they did not wish to discuss matters other than

terms and conditions. But that is exactly the response given when the union initially warned that St Mungo's close cooperation with Home Office forced deportation was unethical, probably unlawful, and would prove damaging to its reputation.

### No info

Management do not even know how many Section 21s St Mungo's has used. St Mungo's management has created new high-paid 'transformation management' posts to drive through a 'transformation programme.' The organisation's leadership seems focused on corporate money-saving goals, to the detriment of its social aims.

### Profiting from housing crisis

Housing lawyer Nick Bano says one of his clients faced eviction from her studio flat, which had been without heating for two years, and in which she was not allowed to have her children stay overnight. The landlord was St Mungo's!

"Even a homeless charity does not see the irony in operating as a

real-estate profiteer during a housing crisis."

### Damaging corporatisation

St Mungo's management repeatedly undermines the hard work of its staff, with a shortsighted focus on narrow financial priorities. Management should stop these evictions, engage with Unite, and halt damaging corporatisation initiatives, such as the transformation programme.

**Join the fightback**

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## 'We see through hospital trust's 'lies'



## Stop Rotherham NHS evictions

**MICK SUTER**  
SHEFFIELD AND SOUTH YORKSHIRE SAVE OUR NHS  
CHAIR

We gathered outside Rotherham Hospital to demand that the eviction of 76 medical staff from the three onsite accommodation blocks is stopped. The hospital trust wants to see everyone out by the end of January.

The residents feel betrayed. Many are international students and workers who came to Rotherham because of the offer of accommodation.

The trust says that it cannot afford

to do repairs after a fire safety report. This is a smokescreen.

It had the report on 29 July, and sent eviction letters out the next day. No consultation, no meeting of the board.

ITV Calendar News, Radio Sheffield, and the Rotherham Advertiser were all reporting on the lively well-attended protest on 7 October. Rotherham local government Unison, Royal College of Nursing South Yorkshire, the branch secretary of PCS union digital health, alongside Socialist Party members and Sheffield Save Our NHS, all sent people to demand an end to these evictions.

The report calls for new safety doors, and the clearance of the exit ways. It does not say anything about any major repairs. We say do the repairs, and keep the blocks open!

Don't add to the homelessness in Rotherham. Don't add to the 7,000-plus on the council waiting list.

The campaign will continue to build pressure on the board to stop the evictions.

- Read what we've said before – 'Rotherham NHS Trust plans over 80 evictions of health workers' at [socialistparty.org.uk](http://socialistparty.org.uk)

## Waltham Forest – Save Markhouse Centre for disabled adults from Labour cuts

**ROY WILLS**  
WALTHAM FOREST SOCIALIST PARTY

Pretty soon now, the only publicly owned buildings will be town halls, where the councillors decide on all these cuts.

The temptation must be immense. For instance, there's the Markhouse Centre in Walthamstow in east London. It serves adults with special needs.

Is it vital for the wellbeing of vulnerable adults, who would otherwise have to fend for themselves? Yes.

But does it make a profit? No.

Can the Waltham Forest Labour council make money by selling the land, and boast to the electorate that it is not going bust like other authorities? Yes.

The Socialist Party and the trade unions in Waltham Forest Trades Council have lent our support to the campaign to prevent the closure of this specially equipped centre.

The Labour council claim that the complete refurbishment of the centre would cost £1.2 million and, therefore, this is a reason not to do any repairs at all. This approach does not really seem logical or fair.

Quite apart from its immensely practical support, the centre is a source of community for people who

would otherwise be isolated. Have we really become a society that does not want to deal with those amongst us who are less fortunate?

The proposed closure date has already been pushed back a month. We are aiming to cause further delay and hopefully halt the process altogether.

The Labour council should demand the funding we need from the Labour government, and join with us to campaign for it.

- **Public meeting hosted by trades council**

- Thursday 24 October, 7pm, William Morris Community Centre, 8 Greenleaf Road, E17 6QQ

- **Lobby the council cabinet**

- Tuesday 3 December, 1pm, town hall steps

**WHAT WILL LIFE BE LIKE FOR DISABLED PEOPLE UNDER STARMER?**

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## Caerphilly Labour council doubles down with 600 job cuts

**DAVE REID**  
SOCIALIST PARTY WALES

Labour-run Caerphilly council has doubled down on its cuts agenda by announcing 600 job losses. This follows threats to close meals on wheels, Blackwood Miners' Institute, and Llancaiach Fawr house.

At its latest meeting, Labour gave in to pressure not to close meals on wheels, although it has increased charges to service users. In effect, this is another tax on the elderly, following the Labour government cutting winter fuel allowance.

### Neither heating or eating

The Labour government is cutting their heating, and the Labour council is cutting their food!

Labour politicians have bemoaned the 2,000 devastating job cuts at Tata Steel in Port Talbot. But now they are carrying out nearly one third of Tata's cuts at Caerphilly!

And, of course, with those 600 jobs, go the vital services those workers provide the local community.

This isn't out of financial necessity but on the advice of private consultancy firm Perago, which profits from cutting services. The council is paying it £1.7 million for 'help' with restructuring.

We have a Labour UK government, a Labour Welsh government, and a



Labour council. Labour is in charge at all levels of government, and yet the cuts continue.

The council has already agreed £20 million cuts, and plans £45 million more. Caerphilly council must vote down these cuts.

If there is a shortfall then it must work together with other Welsh councils, and build a mass campaign to

demand that the UK and Welsh governments provide sufficient funding to restore our services.

### Where's the money?

In the meantime, it can draw on its reserves to plug the gap. All Caerphilly council departments underspent last year.

Council reserves stand at £192

million. £90 million is "unallocated", ready to be used in any way the council sees fit.

Another £73 million of reserves has been allocated for "specific projects" by the council. What is more important than basic council services? More white elephants?

Who should pay for this crisis in public funding – working people who

have kept this country going, or the very wealthy who have accumulated enormous wealth? And some of those profits drip into freebies for Labour politicians.

Labour is not Labour anymore. It puts forward watered-down Tory policies, instead of fighting for the working class.

We need our unions to stop funding Keir Starmer's Labour, and instead form a new workers' party that will stand up and fight to defend our services.

### CAERPHILLY SOCIALIST PARTY SAYS:

- Stop the cuts. Save 600 jobs! Dip into the council's £184 million reserves as a temporary measure
- Build a mass campaign of communities and trade unions to defend all council services and jobs
- Campaign with other councils to demand adequate funding from Welsh Labour Senedd and UK Westminster governments
- For workers' candidates to replace the councillors who are trying to cut our services
- Make the rich pay for the Tory mess, not our pensioners
- For a new mass workers' party

- Read what we've said before – 'Save services – No cuts! Make the super-rich pay' at [socialistparty.org.uk](http://socialistparty.org.uk)

# Why I joined Socialist Students and Socialist Party

## Bite your tongue, or shout and be heard?

FRANK HAMMOND  
COVENTRY SOCIALIST PARTY

Calling all students, have you heard of the Socialist Students society? Joining Coventry University in September, and not coming from anywhere near, I was eager to look around me and see what this small city could possibly offer.

Being a disabled working-class lad, it's been easy for me to see the injustice in the world, like many others. It's a damn crime, and unfortunately we live in a world where it's plain to see.

So instead of shutting my eyes and plugging my ears, fulfilling the capitalist system's needs, when it came time to looking for student societies, one immediately caught my eye – the Socialist Students society.

I spoke with the Socialist Students and Socialist Party members running the campaign stall to gain an

understanding of the surrounding area's social and political climate, the members' individual beliefs, and where they were hoping to take these ideas.

Pleasantly surprised to meet people with strong-willed, determined, and empathetic attitudes, I've chosen to sign up and get actively involved, accepting a formal invite to a meeting to further discuss our intentions and desires to create a better life for people, and how we can achieve that.

Coming from an area where people are constantly misguided by the media, or purposefully distracted from the injustice, I have felt nothing but pride and gratitude to have been introduced to my optimistic community with open arms and an opportunity to have a say.

After gathering locally with our members, it's refreshing to drink in the pure passion I've witnessed, and to be educated on the change that



Frank (centre) campaigning in Coventry COVENTRY SOCIALIST PARTY

is happening in Coventry and surrounding areas right now.

And it's bigger than we think. Because each and every one of us have a voice.

It's just our choice to bite our tongue, or shout and be heard. What choice will you make?

Join Socialist Students and the Socialist Party today, and be active in the quest for change.

Join the fightback

JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

- Visit [socialistparty.org.uk/join](https://socialistparty.org.uk/join)
- or call 020 8988 8777
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to find out more today!

## Cardiff students angry about fees and war

ARIS PREVOST AND JOE FATHALLAH  
CARDIFF SOCIALIST STUDENTS AND SOCIALIST PARTY

Socialist Students was at freshers to meet and discuss with all those looking for an alternative to rising tuition fees, marketisation of higher education, slum housing, and universities investing in arms manufacturers responsible for death and destruction in the Middle East.

Keir Starmer's Labour government is threatening to raise the tuition fees cap to £10,500 within five years, putting another nail in the coffin of accessible education for working-class students.

Last year, an encampment for Gaza was set up at the university, and succeeded in forcing management to conduct a review of investments into companies supplying arms to the Israeli military. Many of those students are back this year, and ready to fight again!

Socialist Students activists, with some help from Socialist Party members who booked time off work to assist, got an excellent response with our demands for ending of student fees, and fully publicly funded education, under the democratic control of staff, students, and the wider community.

We had two stalls at each end, and had great discussions on topics that people brought up. Students could see that we are a serious campaigning organisation.



CARDIFF SOCIALIST STUDENTS

People were against the potential rise in university fees, against the Labour government more, and against the war in Gaza and Lebanon. 18 people turned up to our first meeting – which was on 'What is Socialism?' – interested in building an active, campaigning Socialist Students society for the coming year.

Many also wanted to find out more about the Socialist Party. We now have weekly Socialist Students campaigning stalls to keep the momentum up.

Join the student fightback: join...

socialist students

- Visit [socialiststudents.org.uk/join](https://socialiststudents.org.uk/join)
- or call 020 8988 8761
- or text your name and school, college or uni to 07749 379 010

## Bring halls back, build council houses and control the rent

JONATHAN OSAKO  
BIRMINGHAM SOCIALIST STUDENTS

Student rent has increased by an average of 14.73% between 2022 and 2023, according to research from NatWest. In some places by as much as 20%, in 2024, the average monthly rent is now £689.43!

And it's not just the rent going up. In fact the only thing that's not skyrocketing is the money we get to live on! These increases have changed the lifestyle of many students. More than half, 56% of students, are spending less on social activities – with a negative impact on their social lives and wellbeing.

### Rip-off rent

Meanwhile, to make ends meet, many students have to find a part-time job while being a full-time student, impacting on their ability to study. No one should be coerced to sacrifice their entire social life for work in order to survive. The opportunity for students to socialise and

connect is what allows the youth to organise many of the social movements we see today.

This recent shift of student life reflects how capitalism causes alienation. By suppressing the wage to the minimum possible, workers are exhausted by working all hours in order to sustain themselves. This leaves little time or energy to socialise or have a life outside the career. This is an attempt to stop workers from being able to organise effective movements to fight back.

Likewise, many students spend all their time on studying and their part-time job with little time socialising with others, hoping to have a well-paid job upon graduation.

Socialist Students fights for halls to be brought into public ownership, not in the hands of profit-making vultures. They should be invested in so they're safe for students to live in. We also call for the building of council houses, and rent controls so that we all have an affordable, comfortable place to live.

WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

- [editors@socialistparty.org.uk](mailto:editors@socialistparty.org.uk)

or, if you're not online, write to the Socialist Inbox, PO Box 1398, Enfield EN1 9GT



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WORKSHOP THEME	SATURDAY 9 NOVEMBER 11AM - 1PM	SATURDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2-4PM	SUNDAY 10 NOVEMBER 10AM - 12NOON	SUNDAY 10 NOVEMBER 1-2.45PM
SMASH RACISM	You can't have capitalism without racism	After the riots: the case for a trade union community defence stewards organisation	After the Austrian elections: is the rise of the far right inevitable	
PERSPECTIVES FOR CLASS STRUGGLE	<b>BUILD THE SOCIALIST OPPOSITION</b> Saturday 9 Nov 5.30-7.30pm	Could AI and a green new deal give capitalism a new lease of life?	A new era for the struggle for socialism in Britain	Do we face an authoritarian world?
GRASSROOTS POWER	Origins of the Labour Party: a Marxist approach		Accessibility: Phone 020 8988 8777 or email <a href="mailto:socialism@socialistparty.org.uk">socialism@socialistparty.org.uk</a> to tell us what you need	Community organisation: the route to a new party?
TROTSKYISM TODAY	How to win workers and young people to socialism	Climate catastrophe: what kind of action can end it?	Golden tickets include entry to the entire weekend and one night in a London hostel: £35 unwaged or low waged; £60 waged; £80 solidarity	
INTRODUCTION TO MARXISM	Marxism and the state: the role of the police	Marxist economics: understanding capitalism to change the world	Historical materialism: how Marxists understand progress	Marxist philosophy: using dialectical materialism
A POLITICAL VOICE FOR THE WORKING CLASS	Post 2007-08: what happened to the 'new left' parties?	What role could the Green Party play in the fight against Starmer's austerity?	Will the trade unions build a new workers' party?	
A WORLD IN CRISIS	Sri Lanka: new president, same struggle for survival	Hosted by Nigeria Solidarity: How can the #EndBadGovernance In Nigeria movement win?	Class struggle in the USA after the presidential elections	Revolution and counter-revolution in France
MIDDLE EAST: FAILED BY CAPITALISM	How is a Palestinian state achievable?	Where now for the Iranian revolution?	What is the role of the Israeli working class?	
END OPPRESSION	Is society becoming more misogynist?	The Cass Review and the culture wars	Capitalism and Islamophobia	What will life be like for disabled people under Starmer?
BUILD THE FIGHTBACK UNDER STARMER		Students v Starmer: the battle on campus	Scotland & Starmer: where next for Scottish independence?	Why socialists fight for nationalisation
TRADE UNIONISM TODAY		PCS: the fight for the future of the union	Preparing the trade unions to fight under Labour?	Tickets and info: <a href="http://socialism.org.uk">socialism.org.uk</a> or scan here: 
MARXISM IN ACTION	60 years of Militant and the Socialist: a Marxist paper and its role in the fightback	Free creche: a free creche runs throughout the event - highly recommended by kids and parents alike. To book your place, email <a href="mailto:socialism@socialistparty.org.uk">socialism@socialistparty.org.uk</a> or phone Oscar on 020 8988 8777 by 5pm 4 November.	Lessons from Liverpool 1983-7 for fighting the winter fuel payment cut and more	

# BUILD THE SOCIALIST OPPOSITION

to war, racism, austerity, Starmer and, the capitalist system he defends

Main rally for socialism, Saturday 9 November 5.30-7.30pm Logan Hall, Institute of Education, WC1H 0AL

Taking place on Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 November, the Socialism 2024 weekend will arm you with the ideas to fight back under the Starmer government against the capitalist system it defends.

Socialism 2024 will come only days after Labour's autumn budget in which Starmer and Reeves plan to make the working class pay for the crisis of the capitalist system - while the rich get richer.

Join hundreds of trade unionists, students, community campaigners, and those who want to find out about socialist ideas, to discuss and debate how we fight back and ideas to change the world.

The workshops are listed inside, but the centrepiece of the event will be the main rally on the Saturday evening where you will hear from leading socialists.

### GETTING A TICKET

The best way to get tickets is online or through Socialist Party members you know. You can also phone 02089888777. There is a 10% discount on tickets until 5pm on 8 November. Tickets: [www.socialism.org.uk](http://www.socialism.org.uk)

Weekend tickets: £20-£60



Golden tickets (includes a night in a hostel): £35-£80



Saturday or Sunday only: £12.50-£50  
Saturday rally only: £7.50-£30 solidarity



£1/£2 solidarity price

socialistparty.org.uk



# the Socialist

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# NO FEE RISES NO UNI CUTS



# Make the super-rich pay for free education

**ROBBIE DAVIDSON**  
MANCHESTER SOCIALIST STUDENTS

**A**fter fifteen years of Tory austerity attacking our jobs, homes and services, Keir Starmer and Rachel Reeves have made clear to the bosses their government won't be a radical departure. And, hearing about difficult decisions to be made on things including education funding, students are preparing for the worst.

Already, the university cost of living is at an all-time high. And the money we need to live on – once maintenance grants now transformed into loans – has not risen with inflation.

And its not just students. Lecturers and university staff are being exploited ever more – with low pay and longer hours. They have organised in their unions against poor pay and conditions during the strike wave and against redundancies now.

Students at this point in time, however, do not have the same level of organisation to match our growing frustration. For most of us, the students union is nothing more than a cafe and bar. Socialist Students members in freshers' weeks across the country have raised the need to fill that void with democratic fighting student organisations.

Free education should be a right for all, and this can only be achieved by taking it back into our hands. We've been told to tighten our belts by the six-figure salary bosses at the core of the marketised system. But its time the super-rich bosses and corporations are made to pay

The University and College Union (UCU) has called for an education levy on big business to pay for an end to tuition fees. We believe students and workers should have a democratic say over how university funding is spent and our universities are run. At our public meetings and stalls we found that our programme for free education chimes with students.

When they tripled tuition fees in 2010, the ensuing outrage lacked the organisation to sustain a proper movement against them. We will be prepared this time! Join Socialist Students today to get involved in the fightback.

**Socialist Students says:**

- **No to further fee increases** – get organised on campus to fight for free education! Cancel student debt, replace student loans with living grants tied to the rate of inflation. Make the super-rich pay!
- **No cuts and no closures!** Build democratic student organisations to link up with campus trade unions and the wider working class to fight for the funding our universities need
- **Kick big business off campus!** End marketisation of our education. Open up university finances to democratic oversight and control including by elected students' representatives and campus trade unions, with the power to terminate all contracts and research tied to war, profiteering and exploitation, while guaranteeing jobs and funding
- **Students need a political voice** – build a new mass workers' party that will stand up for students and workers and fight for socialism
- **Fight for socialist change** – for democratic public ownership of the banks, monopolies and major industry to provide us with a future