



no cuts!



Oct
2010

Workers' and community **action** together for **better** jobs and services

Cuts and youth: “time to fight for our future!”

Young people today are growing up in an environment of increasing cuts in their services and education, mass unemployment and poverty. For some, the only alternative is to join the armed forces to fight, and possibly die, in the UK's wars.

Having experienced 13 years of disappointment from New Labour, young people are not at all optimistic about the Conservative-LibDem coalition. The previous government abolished grants, began the privatisation of secondary schools via the academies and started the cuts in higher education. It also trimmed many other opportunities for young people through cuts in funding for training services and youth clubs. But is the Con-Lib coalition going to offer anything different?

Since day one at 10 Downing Street, the only issue the new government has wanted to tackle is the £152 billion deficit. One of its first acts was a wave of £6 billion of cuts. This was followed by another £12.5 billion of cuts in its emergency Budget. These included many which



Young people in the firing line. Friends of Hackney Nurseries protest against the cuts that will reduce assisted places, cost jobs, and put pressure on childcare quality - but Cllr Rita Krishna wouldn't even accept a petition! See another Photo on page 3.

directly affected young people, such as the £200 million cut from university budgets, stopping 10,000 going to such institutions. In addition, the government has “saved” £500 million via the closure of organisations set up to help reduce unemployment through training and advice. And the Department for Education faces £670 million off its budget. In addition, the ConDems want to see more big business involvement

in local schools through its Free Schools policy. They want the academy program extended much further into secondary education, and also into primary schools.

There can be no doubt these cuts and policies will make young people's lives more difficult. And there are more cuts to come in chancellor George Osborne's spending review on 20 October. This means the cuts made so far are here to stay.

Until now, many of us have either ignored the issues we face or chosen to come together with other young people through street gangs – making matters ever worse. This cannot continue. It is time we realised these cuts affect every one of us, no matter where we come from.

The conditions for a common fight back are much more feasible than they were yesterday. The need for collective struggle is greater than ever.

We need to raise our voice in unity against education and social cuts, against war and occupations and to fight for a world of equality and opportunities

by Oktay Sahbaz, Day-Mer Youth Committee member

Join organising meetings Tuesday 5th and 19th October, MOTH Club—see back page

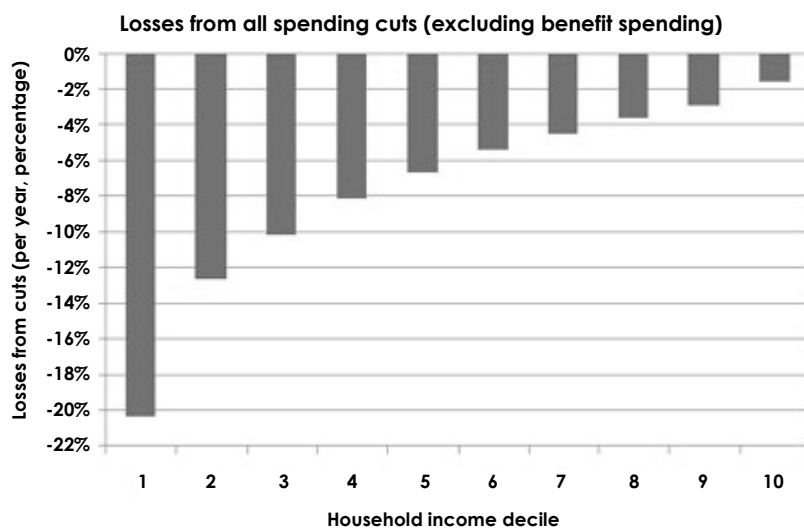
Budget plans will hit poorest hardest

Look at this graph. It shows how much different people will lose from spending cuts. On the left are the poorest ten percent, losing over one fifth of their income.

On the right, losing less than 2%, the richest 10%. The government say this is a “progressive” budget. They say that what they are doing is necessary. They are lying!

Corporation tax has been reduced by 4% over four years, while VAT has risen to 20% from 17.5%.

Even if it were necessary to make such huge cuts, why do they have to fall on the poor rather than the rich?



What's up down the tube?

Tube strikes are vital to protect safety and jobs for Londoners when the government won't take responsibility, writes Janine Booth, Secretary, RMT London Transport Regional Council and Aspland and Marcon Estate resident

We may not have London Underground here in Hackney (except at our very edges!), but the loss of 800 Tube staff posts would still affect us - in a very bad way. That's why so many Hackney residents and workers fully support Tube unions RMT and TSSA in their campaigning and industrial action against these cuts.

Most of us travel around London regularly, and when we travel by Tube, we need staff to help with directions, tickets, service disruptions and emergencies. Yet LU management - and their political masters in the Mayor's office - plan to cut 800 jobs and cut ticket office opening times by nearly 7,500 hours.

450 ticket-selling jobs could go, plus hundreds of Customer Service Assistants - the station staff who work on the gatelines and platforms, making announcements, giving information, carrying out security checks, assisting drivers, helping disabled passengers and

evacuating stations in emergencies.

This will leave passengers to travel with little assistance around a less safe and secure network. The remaining staff will be overworked and vulnerable. And there will be 800 fewer jobs for unemployed Londoners and school-leavers - including those in Hackney.

The unions also believe that this round of job cuts will be followed by further cuts in Tube drivers, stations supervisors, service control and other staff.

Transport for London and London Underground say that in the current economic climate, they have to save money. And yet they pay their top bosses enormous salaries. Transport Commissioner Peter Hendy was paid £393,551 in 2009/10, and several directors were not far behind. If TfL wants to save money, it could cut fat-cat pay and open its books to scrutiny by the public and the trade unions, rather than cut essential frontline staff.

Harmoni out of tune with our health

The non-profit service which provides out of hours GP support in four boroughs including Hackney, is to be privatised.

There has been no open consultation on the decision to transfer the service, which is known as Camidoc.

Apparently Harmoni has been offered £250,000 to take the contract, even though Camidoc has been underfunded for years, and Harmoni has no experience running a service as large or busy as this.

Many GPs feel unable to work for Harmoni, concerned that they would threaten their medical registration by working in unsafe conditions.

Workers and patients are objecting to the transfer. More than 200 GPs have signed a letter of protest.

For more information, contact Hackney Keep Our NHS Public on hackneykonp@aol.com or 07745 130 645

Women in education: the first target of cuts

As the axe starts swinging and public sector employees contemplate their future, it is, as usual, low paid women who face the biggest challenge.

Women have been confined to the lowest paid work in the public sector for a long time, and in local government they suffer the most from discriminatory pay policies. For example, a teaching assistant in a Hackney school is paid around £12,000 per annum, £4,000 less than a street sweeper and a massive £15,000 less than a council administrator – and that's 35 years after the Sex Discrimination Act was brought in.

The previous government and trade unions agreed in 1997 that all councils would equalise the terms of men and women under the Single Status programme. Hackney council made the changes in 2001.

However, at the same time, the government ordered the council to transfer management of education to the arms length organisation, the Learning Trust. This meant that, although the changes were made equalise the terms of council workers, education staff, mainly women, were not included. The Learning Trust has not yet implemented changes. This has meant that, as well as receiving a pittance in their pay packets, these women will also receive a smaller pension.

Under union pressure, the Learning Trust is now carrying out a pay review for support staff, likely to result in a pay rise of some sort, schools worried about the impact on their budgets of higher pay for women, plus the affect of back-pay,



Nursery cuts: it's children and low paid women workers under fire here too

are frantically shedding staff. This is made worse by the cuts at a national level, when what is needed is better funding—not worse.

We have already seen “reorganisations” of staff in Grazebrook, Burbage, Colvestone, Horizon, Ickburgh, Stormont House and Downsview schools, with proposals to make teaching assistant staff redundant in every case.

The schools claim that the changes are being made to “improve education provision”. But how do you improve education provision when you reduce the number of staff providing it? Schools need to be efficient, but research has been proven that kids achieve better “educational outcomes” from being taught in smaller groups and more one-to-one help.

In Hackney, despite years of gentrification, there are still high levels of under achievement, and pockets of deprivation persist in many parts of the borough. The Trust itself has contributed to the cycle of

deprivation and lack of opportunity by paying women, most of whom live in Hackney, so little for so many years.

There are about 80 schools in Hackney, some big, some small, and between them they employ about 2,000 support staff - the majority on the lowest pay scale. If that majority had been paid fairly for the past nine years, they would have been able to break the cycle.

The tragic irony is that most of the women working in Hackney as teaching assistants also send their kids to the schools at which they work. So, as schools teach our

children to play fair and treat everyone with respect, the children of teaching assistants go home to see their mothers scrimping and saving to make ends meet—and now, perhaps without a job at

all.

Unison and local parents have ideas for what we can do—get in touch.

By a local parent and Hackney worker

FACT:
The Fawcett Society estimates that 75% of the burden from tax and benefit changes will fall on women

FACT:
65% of public sector workers are women

Tenants under attack

In two unprecedented attacks this summer, the Coalition Government has targeted tenants. Proposals to change the rules for claiming Housing Benefit and Local Housing Allowance and threats to the principle of the security of tenure mean that tenants have a fight on their hands.

In August, David Cameron announced that he wanted to see the end of lifetime tenancies for new council and housing association tenants. In other words, he wants to end the principle of the security of a home for life that social housing tenants have always enjoyed. This goes to the very heart of the principle of something so important, the security of the place we call home and it stigmatises our housing as being 'housing of last resort'. It is a vicious attack which many politicians and campaigners have rightly denounced.

Secondly, changes in the way housing benefits are paid, announced in the June budget this year, will deliberately hit those tenants who are the least well off. These cuts are going to affect those who rent in the private sector but further proposals will affect council and housing association tenants too. Planned caps on the level of benefit claims will mean many

tenants will be forced to make up the shortfall in their rent. The high rents of private sector housing in Hackney mean many privately renting tenants here in Hackney are going to be worse off.

These attacks represent a housing crisis for which tenants are not responsible but for which they are being asked to pay. There is now a housing crisis in London. In Hackney, the number of people on the council housing waiting list is around 12,000, with over 1,000 people living in temporary accommodation. The solution is not to target tenants but to build more council housing.

An open letter to the Government about their housing benefit proposals has been launched. You can see it at and add your name at www.camdenfed.org.uk.

Defend Council Housing is organising a National Lobby of Parliament on 11th October and a meeting on London's Housing Crisis at 7pm on Monday 18th October in the Grand Committee Room at the House of Commons.

www.defendcouncilhousing.org.uk.

By a Hackney Council tenant



He doesn't want you to go...

March at Tory Conference! Sunday 3rd October, Birmingham

Coach leaves 8am from opposite Hackney Town Hall: £16/8 waged/unwaged. For info and tickets call 07932 714833. Called by Right to Work

Hackney organising meetings

Tuesday 5th and 19th October
7pm, at the MOTH Club—see below for map and info.

London March against cuts Saturday 23rd October

Assemble 11am, Unity House 39 Chalton Street NW1 1JD. Called by RMT.

Mass lobby of Hackney Council

Wednesday 27 October
Assemble 6.30pm at Hackney Town Hall, Mare St. Join with us and other Hackney residents and workers who want to fight cuts.

www.hackneyalliance.wordpress.com

For Turkish see hackneyalliance.wordpress.com/turkiye-turkish/

**HACKNEY ALLIANCE
TO DEFEND
PUBLIC SERVICES**



Got a story? Want to get involved?

- Call Glyn on 07810 545838
- email hackneyalliance@hotmail.co.uk
- Meetings on Tuesday 5th and 19th October, 7pm, MOTH Club, Valette St
- Need a crèche or help with childcare so you can come? Contact us!

