



# no cuts!



Aug  
2010

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

## Dear Hackney,

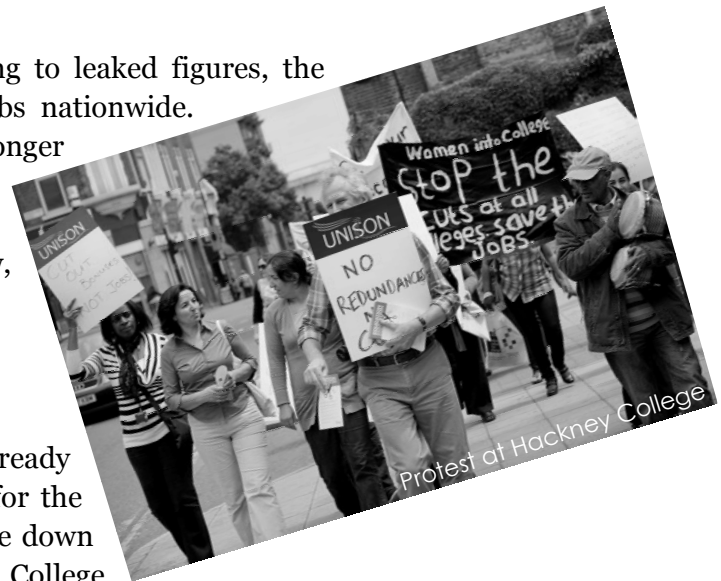
We all know that massive cuts in public services are planned. What does that mean for us? For our families? For our friends?

We don't have to guess. It's already started. Many teaching assistants are being made redundant in Hackney schools. Two refuse trucks have been cut. At Hackney College, jobs and courses are under threat. Subsidised nursery places in Hackney have been cut from an insufficient 300 to a pathetic 60; workers will lose their jobs.

And this is before the "real" cuts begin. According to leaked figures, the government's planned cuts will end 1.3 million jobs nationwide. And for those who stay, they want harder work, longer hours, and static pay -- while the cost of living rises. Health, education, housing, community services -- everything and everyone will suffer. Right now, Hackney Council is planning those cuts.

Can we do anything about it? Sure we can.

A campaign by Friends of Hackney Nurseries has already won back tens of thousands of pounds of funding for the next year, although organising must continue to face down plans for even deeper cuts. The UCU at Hackney College struck against redundancies in May. In April, in the neighbouring borough of Haringey, campaigners heard that they had successfully saved Whittington Hospital's A&E Department, following a demonstration of 5,000. Again, this is only the beginning.



There's no denying we need to step up our game. We can fight for a community to be proud of, but we do need to get organised. We need workers and community members who are prepared to give just a small amount of time to spread the word.

Can Hackney rediscover its fighting spirit? We hope so.

Yours in unity,

**Hackney Alliance to Defend Public Services**

Open meetings:  
7.30 PM, 28 July  
and 11 August,  
Trinity Centre,  
Beechwood Road,  
Dalston

## Is the NHS in Hackney safe?

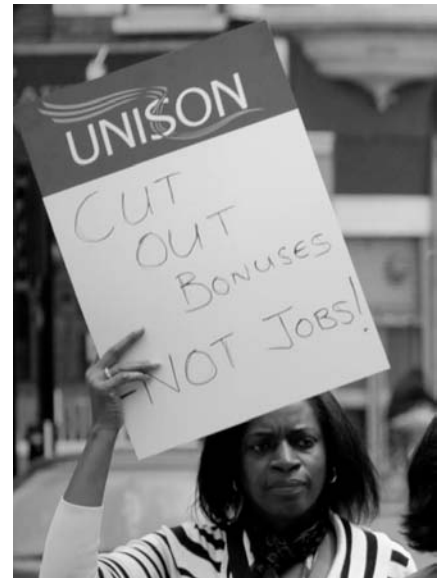
Despite government talk about protecting the NHS, redundancies are being announced throughout the UK. The Hackney PCT (Primary Care Trust) chair told us at our last meeting with her that they will be looking to make "efficiency savings" over the next period - which must translate into cuts and redundancies.

Furthermore, a tidal wave of privatisation will follow from the Coalition plan to move commissioning of health services from PCTs to coalitions of GPs— which will have the task of implementing cuts.

Join Hackney Keep Our NHS Public campaigning against cuts in Hackney PCT.

**Contact:** [hackneykonp@aol.com](mailto:hackneykonp@aol.com) or 07745 130 645

**Next meeting:** 7 pm, Thursday 2nd September, MOTH Club, Valette St



Protest at Hackney College

## “If all regular workers turn up, people are sent back home without a job and unpaid”

- cuts and agency work at the waste depot

At Hackney waste depot the management took off two dust cars from the commercial waste collection rounds. The extra-work has to be done by the remaining crews. 'Job and Finish' now means working seven hours, high-speed without break.

In addition the council wants to scrap the 'attendance bonus', which equals a wage cut of about 1,000 Pounds. 'Seniority Bonus' has been scrapped already some years back. Council workers are increasingly displaced by agency work.

At Hackney waste depot around 30 to 40 per cent of us (bin men, sweepers, drivers) are temps, most of them on the minimum wage, most of them on day-jobs. In addition to this division there are all the 'private companies' and 'self-employed' engaged in rubbish collection – no strike could be successful without

including them. Agency and council managers organise the 'morning day labour market' at the depot. This means that temp workers are supposed to turn up at 5:30 am and wait till about 7:30 am. If all regular workers turn up or too many temps arrived, people are sent back home without a job and unpaid – after having been employed at the depot for more than a year.

If a temp works five days a week the minimum wage amounts to around 200 Pounds a week. If you have worked a lot of overtime and your tax increases, this wage drops to 180 Pounds. For five days full-time bin work! You hear some stories from the 'after-job life', which correspond to the wage levels: "\*\*\*\*, these pain killers don't work, this \*\*\*\*ing tooth is killing me! If I was still on benefits, at least they would pay the dentist". "I pay only 45 pounds rent per

week, three of us guys share the room. The guy on the sofa is even better off, he pays only 30 quid". Obviously there is a high turn-over among the temps. The work itself is 'rubbish': apart from physical strain and bad smells it is the traffic which increasingly forces you to speed up, to inhale more fumes, to be in constant semi-danger.

If we think about how to resist the cuts, in most public sector work-places there is no 'united public work-force' and the main issue people worry about are not the figures of public spending as such, but the consequences: more stress, lower wages, more insecurity and divisions. Demands to force back the cuts must include the struggle against this enforced casualisation. We need to fight back – and fight for more.

*By a refuse worker*

# Cuts and kids don't mix!

## Childcare is not a luxury

**Cuts to nursery funding** do not *just* mean families losing out and paying more, or nursery workers working even harder for less, or losing their jobs when nurseries are forced to close. Parents (mostly women) are being forced back into the home to raise children in isolation, which means that cutting childcare is an attack on the whole community.

Hackney's nurseries have been under attack this year – ironically not because of the Tory budget, but because the Learning Trust, a private company that controls the funding for children's services in Hackney, has arbitrarily cut nursery funding. They have also changed the rules for funding distribution. Friends of Hackney Nurseries have been fighting to stop these cuts with some success.

The Learning Trust imposed cuts of up to £50,000 to nurseries receiving commissioning grants. Commissioning grants subsidise childcare places for parents on low incomes. To put this in context, commissioning grant funding is one of only a small set of 3 to 4 funding streams that nurseries receive to cover the cost of childcare provision. If there were no grants, childcare would be far more expensive and out of reach for most families. As it is, the funding that supposedly pays for the universal 15 hours a week free childcare for 3 and 4



A young Hackney resident at a fun day organised by Friends of Hackney Nurseries

year olds does not cover the cost of provision – so the nurseries have to pay for some of the free childcare themselves. Put together with the cuts in commissioning grants, and the threat of future budget cuts, affordable childcare in Hackney is fast disappearing.

On top of the cuts - imposed with no notice, consultation or explanation - the Learning Trust has introduced changes to the rules as to which nurseries can apply for grants. From next year all nurseries will be able to apply, including private nurseries that are run for profit and the Council's Children's Centres that already receive money from both the central government and the Trust. If this change is allowed to go through, there will be more nurseries chasing less money: that means closures, job losses and fewer childcare places.

This is not hype – already nursery workers have lost jobs, and at least one community nursery in Hackney is set to close. All this without any explanation or transparency. The Learning Trust must open its books, show us where the money has gone and explain to us *why*.

The Learning Trust is the UK's first private not-for profit company to take over the responsibility of running all education services for an entire borough. With the prospects of more cuts next year, we *must* stand together to *demand* quality, affordable, community controlled childcare in Hackney. The Trust and the Council must recognise that childcare is not a luxury but a *necessity* and a right—it must be fully funded for *all* of Hackney!

# What will *more* academy schools mean for Hackney?

Six Hackney schools have registered an interest in becoming an academy under the government's new proposal to fast track outstanding schools to Academy Status.

Staff in **Stoke Newington, Clapton Girls'** and **Bethnal Primary** immediately signed petitions and passed motions in their union groups to present to their respective governors. NUT members have leafleted students and parents to explain why they do not want their schools to become academies.

Why? Academies have no links to Local Authorities and are therefore not accountable to any local authority. Academies are under no obligation to follow the national curriculum or pay

nationally agreed pay and conditions. Staff in some existing Academies in Hackney are expected to work longer hours which has led to many Academies having high staff turnover rates. This is a great concern for Hackney which has struggled in the past to retain teachers.

Academies are able to skew their intakes in favour of higher-achieving students which discriminate against special needs and low attaining students. Local authorities can 'direct' state maintained schools to accept special needs and looked-after children but can only 'ask' academies. Furthermore there is increasing evidence that academies exclude more children

than state schools. This has heightened concerns that academies will create a 'hierarchy' of schools.

The Hackney NUT Teachers Association are committed to fighting academies; together with Other unions, the Anti Academies Alliance and *all people in Hackney* concerned about these threats to state education. We are planning local action including leafleting in Mare St and a public meeting at the start of the new term. Please contact Hackney Teachers Association if you would like to be kept informed—[office@hackney.nut.org.uk](mailto:office@hackney.nut.org.uk).

*By a teacher at Clapton school and NUT member*

[www.antiacademies.org.uk](http://www.antiacademies.org.uk)

## ... quote of the month

**In my view these cuts will be a disaster for ordinary working people who will see their living standards fall and unemployment rise.**

- David Blanchflower, former Bank of England economist

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**Got a story?  
Want to get involved?**

- Call Glyn on 07810 545838
- email [hackneyalliance@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:hackneyalliance@hotmail.co.uk)
- Or come to our next meeting!

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