

75 years ago 200 unemployed men from Jarrow marched from their home in the North East to London to demand jobs and an end to their poverty conditions.

This October Youth Fight for Jobs is marching their route again to demand:

- A massive government scheme to create jobs which are socially useful and apprenticeships which offer guaranteed jobs at the end - both paying at least the minimum wage, with no youth exemptions.
- The immediate reinstatement of EMA payments, expanding them to be available to all 16-19 year olds and the scrapping of university fees.
- The immediate re-opening of all youth services that have been closed, including reinstating sacked staff.
- The scrapping of 'workfare' schemes - benefits should be based on need not forced slave labour.
- A massive building and renovation programme of environmentally sound, cheap social housing.

To get involved with the march and for updates from the marchers, see the website (opposite), email youthfightforjobs@gmail.com or call 020 8558 7947

This page was planned and written by young Socialist Party members in the East Midlands.



Low pay, no way!

The most recent increase in the minimum wage was pitiful in the face of the rocketing cost of living. For example, the minimum wage for under 18 year olds was only increased by 4p an hour to £3.68. Many were therefore outraged at big business representatives who claimed that the increase was 'too much' and that it would mean companies are unable to hire young people. Youth Fight for Jobs rejects that young people have to choose between unemployment and low pay. Here Dave Tompkins and Emma Woodhall examine the scandal of low pay.

As the Jarrow March comes through the East Midlands many young people in the region will be asking questions, not just about unemployment but also the conditions faced by those who are 'lucky enough' to have a job.

Of course, the divide between those in work or out of it has nothing to do with luck or in many cases even merit. Politicians and bosses try to divide people on the basis of who is in work and who isn't, just like they try to divide them on the basis of age to undermine solidarity and demonise the unemployed.

Young workers are often the most exploited in a workforce. Often this is

due to the fact that they are not unionised - meaning that they are less aware of what few rights they have. The huge propaganda campaigns by big businesses and their media outlets against trade unions mean that many people have grown up with no understanding of collective action.

Poverty levels

Of all the problems facing young workers, one of the most glaring is low pay. When Labour introduced the minimum wage they introduced it with three tiers. One level of pay for 16-17 year olds, another for 18-20 year olds

(currently £4.98) and the highest for those over 21 (currently £6.08).

While the minimum wage is pitifully low for all age groups it is a scandal that it is legal for employers to pay young people less than others doing the same job.

Being paid less than other workers has no logical reasoning behind it other than basic cost-cutting by bosses. It can lead to tensions in the workforce as resentment grows towards those on higher pay or to younger people brought in because it is cheaper for the bosses.

Low pay is also a potentially humiliating experience that can lead to crippling poverty which reinforces other problems faced by young people such as a lack of housing.

Youth Fight for Jobs (YFJ) has always had an increase in the minimum wage and an end to pay discrimination among its central policies.

YFJ activists realise that ending unemployment is not enough, young people must fight for decent jobs with trade union rights and decent pay and conditions or else a whole generation will be consigned to poverty whether they have a job or not.



Two of the Jarrow marchers at the launch rally photo Suzanne Beishon

YFJ stands for

- A massive government scheme to create socially useful jobs and apprenticeships which pay at least the minimum wage (with no youth exemptions) and offer guaranteed jobs at the end
- When private bosses claim they

can't afford to maintain jobs, they must open their books so we can see where the money has gone

- Huge investment in public services and the nationalisation under democratic control of companies threatening closure or paying poverty wages

Protest, demonstrate, occupy

Students should support 30 November strikes

Helen Pattison

On 8 September this year 283 out of 420 Greek higher education institutions were under occupation. This will remind many in this country of when over 50 universities in the UK were occupied in the weeks surrounding 24 November 2010 against the trebling of university fees to up to £9,000 and the abolition of EMA payments.

Students in the UK did this to defend the education system - for themselves and for future generations. The occupations showed how politically aware young people were and that

they understood the need to defend education for all. Many trade unions and workers came to their aid with solidarity and donations of food.

Students occupied and demonstrated despite the lack of organisation among them before this date.

Today, the unemployed and those in secondary schools up and down the country have no union and the National Union of Students refuses to listen to its members' cries for another national demonstration.

The Tory government is now attacking pensions and so it is time for students to stand by workers who need their support and coordinated action. By

organising through our schools, colleges, universities and youth groups and linking up with unions wherever possible we can create a movement capable of stopping the government in its tracks.

In Greece, the most recent protests were initiated by the education unions taking strike action. For the first time, this happened before term even started but it still didn't stop the Greek youth mobilising huge support and solidarity.

On 30 November students and young people should be on picket lines in solidarity with striking teachers and lecturers, to defend the pensions of their friends, families and future colleagues.



photo Suzanne Beishon

Raffle! Win a framed photo of the original Jarrow march

Large framed photo of original Jarrow march as it came through Northamptonshire. This picture has its own history! In the 1960s it hung in the Whitehall office of a Labour government minister, then it was presented to a Labour activist of 50 years party membership who subsequently left Labour and joined the Socialist Party. £1 a ticket. Raffle drawn at Socialism 2011 on 6 November.



Contact Becci Heagney to reserve tickets: 07751044309 becciheagney1@yahoo.co.uk

Marching in the footsteps of history

Dan Fahey

When the Jarrow March for Jobs leaves Leicester, not only will it be following in the footsteps of the 1936 Jarrow Crusade, but also Leicester's 1905 Unemployed March.

There were three leaders of the march. Amos Sheriff, who would become the city's Lord Mayor in 1922; the Reverend FL Donaldson, of St Marks' Church, who gained the nickname 'vicar of the unemployed'; and George 'Sticky' White, secretary of the Unemployed Committee, who as his nickname suggests, used a walking stick yet still marched to London and back.

On 4 June 1905, 470 unemployed shoemakers set off from Leicester Market Place to London. The news of the protest captured the hearts and minds of the public. As recalled by Sticky's son, George, who was 12 at the time, the crowd was "the biggest that had ever been seen in the market".

From the top of the steps of the Corn Exchange the leaders rallied the men to march to London to protest the conditions of the unemployed and to lobby the government in to passing the Unemployed Workmen Act. A plaque now lies in front of the steps to commemorate the event.

On the march, George joined his father, who like many of the unem-

ployed men had been sacked for his involvement in the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union. He remembers singing songs and the marchers playing harmonicas on the route. The marchers spent their first night on straw in Market Harborough's cattle market. George was (un)fortunately caught truanting and sent back by train.

Arriving in Trafalgar Square, another great crowd greeted the marchers but the authorities, including the King and the Archbishop of Canterbury, refused to see them.

Yet when they came home on 18 June, they were greeted by 140,000 people and the news that the Unemployed Workmen Act had been passed.