

Socialism 2011 finance appeal Support the struggle against all the cuts

Ken Douglas
Socialist Party national treasurer

The Socialist Party is asking all its members and supporters to make a donation to the Socialism 2011 finance appeal. This year promises to be particularly special, as it will get off to a great start with the arrival of the heroic 2011 Jarrow marchers at the rally in Trafalgar Square; the day ending with an inspiring Fight for Socialism rally and the appeal.

Last year we raised £30,578 and although this included large donations of thousands of pounds from redundancy payments and the proceeds of a flat sale, the bulk of the money came from smaller donations of £5 to £500 from those attending the rally and those who couldn't make it on the night.

Let's see if we can surpass that amount this year - it is vital that we are able to finance our campaigning as the struggle against this ConDem government of millionaires grows and intensifies.

Throughout the whole of 2011 Socialist Party members have been at the heart of building the fightback against the cuts.

The magnificent demo on 26 March - the biggest working-class demonstration since the time of the Chartists - saw the Socialist Party mount a huge operation to ensure that our demand for the TUC and the unions to organise a 24-hour public sector strike was seen and heard by every marcher.

The strikes on 30 June which followed showed the potential for action across the public sector and increased the pressure on the trade union leaders to announce the date of 30 November for potentially the biggest strike since 1926.

This is the message that our members have been driving home - that the working class is the most pow-

erful force in society and through organised action can drive this government out.

We are fighting for a future for ourselves and our children. The Institute for Fiscal Studies reports that a staggering 21.8% of all children in the UK will be living in poverty by 2012-13. Yet over the last year the richest 1,000 people in the UK have seen their combined wealth soar to £395 billion and another 20 billionaires have been created.

Find out about Socialist Party meetings and other campaigning events at socialistparty.org.uk/whatson

Our message is simple: why can't the wealth in society be used for the benefit of everyone? It is obscene that these riches are being amassed by a few individuals at the expense of millions of ordinary people - yet this is the future held out to us by the politicians of all the main parties.

Our members are also suffering the effects of the cuts and job losses and the economic uncertainty but will still be prepared to make a sacrifice to donate to the Socialism 2011 appeal. Why? Because we are not just fighting this government, we are fighting for a socialist alternative. For a society where the most important things are schools, hospitals, jobs and a decent environment; not one where all this has to be sacrificed to maintain the banks and the billionaires.

Unlike the Tories we aren't funded by the rich bankers - we rely on you, our members and supporters. Can you donate to our appeal?

Every pound matters - whether you can donate £5, £10, £50 or more - and will be used to finance our struggle. Go to www.socialistparty.org.uk/donate or speak to your local SP branch organiser.



The Socialist Party made sure the demand for a 24-hour public sector strike was raised on 26 March
photo S Beishon

The Socialist Party's (SP) third fighting fund quarter of 2011 closed on a national total of 77%. This however doesn't fully reflect the support SP campaigners have received nor the hard work that has taken place. Many SP branches smashed through their targets on what is always a quieter quarter due to summer holidays.

SP members are meeting, for example, increasing support when campaigning against NHS cuts and privatisation, including the Health and Social Care Bill. There is also outrage over a Yorkshire GP practice charging NHS patients for minor operations. In other areas, members campaigning against council and other local cuts have also received great support.

In the North West, Manchester, Salford and Wirral branches all went over their target with Liverpool closing on a fantastic 669%, topping the league by a country mile, partly due to a number of donations by SP supporters in the area.

Every single branch in South Wales went over the target with Caerphilly SP on an outstanding 225% and Cardiff West not far behind on 173% of a large target.

In the West Midlands, both Coventry branches went over their targets, as did South East Staffordshire and Worcester. Six Yorkshire branches also got the job done - Rotherham SP on 255% of its target, four West

Yorkshire branches and Barnsley/Doncaster SP.

Well done to Kent SP for passing its target and flying the flag for the South East. Nottingham East SP and Mansfield went over 100% in the East Midlands.

Stevenage went almost three times over its target after some back-breaking work at the SP summer camp including burger frying and tent erecting.

It was business as usual for Southampton SP members who cleared a large target, finishing on 131%, and Portsmouth who scrapped over in the last half hour before the close of quarter. In London, Walthamstow branch passed its high target of £850.

In the South West, Gloucester, Dorset and Plymouth branches all went well over their targets.

Thanks is due to Dave Fryatt for his donation of £350, which helped Tower Hamlets branch pass 100%, and to Marcus from Llanelli branch for £100.

With the final quarter of the year now underway, all SP members need to help ensure that we do not fall short of the year's overall target of £100,000. SP branches should draw up plans of how they can reach their fighting fund target, including the Socialism 2011 appeal. Call 020 8988 8777 for help with planning.

Alex Gounelas
Socialist Party fighting fund organiser

Coventry by-election helps build socialist alternative to cuts

Lenny Shail
Coventry Socialist Party

The Socialist Party reaffirmed its strong position in Coventry, coming third in the Lower Stoke ward council by-election on Thursday 6 October on 254 votes (10.06%).

The Socialist Party finished ahead of the racist BNP (149 votes, 5.9%), Greens (114 votes, 3.13%) and Lib Dems (79 votes, 3.13%). On a 18.5% turnout, 2,525 overall votes, Labour retained the seat on 1,366 votes (54.1%) ahead of the Tories on 563 votes (22.3%).

In what was a short campaign period a total of three leaflets and three weekly canvases went out across the ward for Rob McArdle, the 'Socialist Alternative' candidate. Only our day-glo posters could be seen in the ward, thanks to the many discussions that took place on the doors (the only party to do so!) and the concrete work that the Socialist Party and its councillor Dave Nelligan have done over many years in defending jobs, homes and services across Coventry.

The Unite union convenor of one of Coventry's last motor manufacturing factories, London Taxi Com-

pany, was one of the people who nominated and displayed a poster for Rob.

The pre-election public meeting attracted 40 people to hear Rob and Dave speak, and inspired people to join the Socialist Party.

On election day, Socialist Party teams were out all day leafleting, campaigning on stalls, knocking doors and driving round in a loud-speaker equipped car.

The result and work done in the by-election is an important step forward for the anti-cuts movement in Coventry and support for socialist ideas.

Health campaigners take Ascot by storm

Terry Pearce, Neil Adams and Val Pearce
Bracknell Defend Our Community Services (all personal capacity)

On Saturday 8 October, 300 chanting campaigners marched through the heart of Ascot, Berkshire, against the closure of Heatherwood Hospital. The march and rally were well supported by local residents, drivers and shoppers. When marching through the grounds of the threatened hospital, staff waved and cheered from the hospital windows.

The proposed closure of Heath-

erwood is part of the government's attacks on the NHS and would mean patients having to travel long distances for treatment. Already the birthing centre has closed indefinitely and services have been drastically reduced over years.

We demand the immediate reopening of the birthing centre, no more cuts to NHS services in our area and, most of all, no closure of Heatherwood Hospital.

The event was a huge success and is part of a continuing battle. We have collected over 5,500 names on our petition, and received local press and TV coverage.

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SOCIALIST PARTY FIGHTING FUND

	£ target	£ received	July-September 2011	Final chart
North West	1,200	2,885	██████████	██████████
Wales	2,300	2,980	██████████	██████████
Eastern	1,200	1,441	██████████	██████████
West Midlands	2,100	1,982	██████████	██████████
Yorkshire	2,900	2,504	██████████	██████████
East Midlands	1,550	1,316	██████████	██████████
Southern	1,200	910	██████████	██████████
London	6,100	3,571	██████████	██████████
South East	1,000	571	██████████	██████████
South West	1,400	640	██████████	██████████
Northern	600	186	██████████	██████████
England & Wales	3,450	363	██████████	██████████
TOTAL	25,000	19,355	██████████	██████████