

JACKDAW

FOR REVOLUTIONARY ANARCHISM

**BACK OUT ON
THE STREETS!**

ISSUE NO 19 FREE

When the Poor Blame the Poor, the Rich Win

During the summer we witnessed protests around England, targeting people of colour and migrants in a horrifying display of racist hatred. Much of this was instigated by organised extreme right groups, but what is worrying is that their message of hate has found support among the working class. It is a general problem in Britain today that the working class is very divided, not only by racism, but by nationalism, sexism, and other oppressions. If we are to overthrow the current system and create a new society in which there is no exploitation or oppression, then instead of blaming others who are in a terrible situation, such as migrants, we need to unite to fight our real enemy: the bosses, landlords, and the government.

Politicians of all persuasions have used immigrants as a handy scapegoat to divert attention from the failures of the capitalist system itself, failures to provide decent pay, housing, health care and services to the mass of the population, be they pensioners, whose conditions are worsening, or young people denied a future.

The far-right Robinson and Farage are loathsome, of course. Their racist and anti-immigrant rhetoric has fuelled the developing situation. But to concentrate on them when both Tories and Labour have themselves significantly contributed to the whipping up of racist and immigrant hatred ignores the state of play with all the capitalist parties, not to

mention the mainstream media. The Tories concentrated on the small boats crossing the English Channel and on their farcical and costly Rwanda scheme. In this issue of **Jackdaw**, we showcase the campaigns and initiatives that are bringing people together: working class communities against corporations, landlords, and local authorities.



INSIDE

- London museum security workers and UVW
- Cooperation in Hull
- Green Glasgow
- Community vs Gentrification
- Labour and Reform



VOICE OF THE ANARCHIST COMMUNIST GROUP

Security Workers at London Museums Campaign for a Better Deal

Security workers at the Science and Natural History museums are voting for strike action (at the time of going to press) after years of substantial real terms pay cuts, while their employer, Wilson James, makes over £7 million in after tax profits. They have joined the **United Voices of the World (UVW)** who is supporting them in their campaign. Their demands are:

- **£16 an hour**
- **Full sick pay from day one**
- **One more week annual leave**

Is this really too much to ask?

The security guards are proud of what they do and enjoy their job but they believe that they should be fairly compensated. It is demanding work: having to deal with the public, deal with incidents, and administer First Aid. But the pay is so low that they have to work a lot of extra hours to compensate. By joining the UVW they are not only fighting for themselves but for others. As one worker says: "As a member of UVW and one of these museum security officers, I believe



that every long journey begins with a single step. I also believe we are making history – for ourselves, our families, and future generations of security officers – by striving to improve the social and economic conditions of the sector."

The UVW is an example of a grass roots union which has lived up to its name- united voices. Workers from a variety of backgrounds and occupations have found a home here.

From their website:

"United Voices of the World is a member-led, direct action, anti-racist, campaigning trade union and we exist to support and empower the most vulnerable groups of precarious, low-paid and predominantly BAME and migrant workers in the UK. The UVW family brings

together workers across many sectors including cleaning, security, catering and portering from the typically outsourced facilities/services sector and also hospitality, retail, construction, health care workers and other professions including sex workers, artists, architects, childcare workers, social workers, charity sector workers and legal sector workers including paralegals, solicitors, and barristers. We fight the bosses through direct action on the streets and through the courts and demand that all members receive at least the *London Living Wage*, full pay sick pay, dignity, equality and respect."

For more information about the progress of the security workers campaign and other activities of the union see: <https://www.uvwunion.org.uk/en/>

Cooperation Hull: Uniting for Change



Hull was one of the targets for racist rallies and violent attacks. However, the local community fought back with counter protests and emphasised Hull's anti-racism and anti-fascism tradition. According to Lynn Carratt in the Hull Metro (<https://metro.co.uk/2024/08/05/never-thought-ashamed-hull-now-21362153/>):

"It was despicable – this isn't the Hull I know. In my city, we have always historically stood up to racism and fascism. In 1937, fascist leader Oswald Mosley was behind one of the most violent chapters in Hull's political history; he held a rally in the city, and after a violent protest, he was driven out by thousands of anti-fascist dockers and railway workers."

Today, Hull has a number of initiatives that are bringing people together, challenging the far right's attempts to divide the working class. It is one of first UK cities to have a 'Right to Grow' which has led to a proliferation of community gardens, allotments etc. These involve a diversity of people, as everyone needs food. See for example the

Rainbow Garden.

"Rainbow Community Garden continues to be a very good example of how grassroots volunteers with enthusiasm and dedication can transform under-valued local spaces into vibrant, engaging and welcoming places for the whole community." (<https://rainbowgarden.org.uk/>)



Another amazing project is Cooperation Hull. It is based on the following statements:

"We have to view the world as it is - made up of complicated, connected systems: A planet in crisis. A failing economy. A divided society. Broken party politics. This is the story of the

world today and nobody (apart from the 1% at the top) benefits from keeping it this way. No ordinary person wants corrupt leaders, crop failures or the culture war and, to put it simply, there are more of us than there are of them. So..."

And:

"The skyrocketing cost of living, lack of access to housing, a crumbling NHS, and climate breakdown have hit Hull hard. Not only is the political system incapable of dealing with these problems, it has actually created them in the first place. Power and wealth is hoarded rather than shared. Important questions are weaponised to keep us divided. And decisions are made in the interests of corporations rather than the interests of the people. This is true regardless of which party is in power".

It has organised a network of Neighbourhood Assemblies, with each on sending a delegate to a city-wide assembly. "Local people meet regularly to share food and ideas, and organise projects that matter to them."

For more information see: cooperationhull.co.uk

Glasgow North Kelvin Meadow: Green spaces for all

During Covid it soon became apparent that access to green spaces was not equal. Low-income groups, especially people of colour, had the least green spaces near their homes. Increasingly people are becoming away of the importance of connecting with nature for both physical and mental health. Projects that focus on green spaces for working class communities are therefore particularly welcome.

In the middle of a highly dense urban area, bordering a low-income working class community, lies a tiny piece of land, just 1.4 hectares. Glasgow City Council wanted to bulldoze it for a luxury housing development but locals fought back and won. The community now managed the site.

From the website:
"The North Kelvin Meadow is a community group set up on 13 October 2008 to manage the green space between Clouston Street, Sanda Street and Kelbourne Street (G20 – North Kelvin Ward within Glasgow, Scotland).

We manage 1.4 hectares of meadow and woodland (500 trees) in the heart of Glasgow. Also within this land which we manage is: a community orchard of 30 fruit trees, 2 tree houses, 2 mud kitchens for young kids, 3 compost bins (including the big wooden Number 1 in the far

Kelbourne street corner that's awaiting your compost material), an Elves and Fairy corner in an old disused flood light housing unit, 30 raised beds each rented by a person or family per year to grow vegetables in, and a community allotment with 6 raised beds, 1 fire pit, 2 honey bee hives, 6 bumble bee homes, 2 deer (ok, they are wooden deer!) and many muddy puddles to play in! We allow hands on experience regarding nature activities and believe this wild natural greenspace is of a great health benefit, both mental and physical, to this well built up area in Glasgow. Glasgow and, especially the area this land is located in, needs a better connection between people and nature. Many of these young kids for example have never been in a woodland environment. Nor have they ever picked fruit from an orchard tree or understand compost.



They been in parks with avenues of planted trees but not a self-seeded woodland and meadow. The area is predominantly high tenement flats with 8 flats in each block. They don't normally have much of a garden, just a place for their communal bins. With Glasgow near the bottom of the health tables this land of ours is in the right place and providing the right solutions. Plus all this is done via a broad long standing constituted community group.

In 2020 Glasgow City Council has given a 25 year lease of the land, which means this land is protected from property developers etc and so we can now continue our work on behalf of the local community without the risk of being bulldozed."

For more information about the history of how they managed to win see: <https://northkelvinmeadow.com/about/>

Community vs Gentrification

Queen's Market is a long running street market in East London. For the last 20 years Newham Council and developers have been trying to build luxury flats and other nonsense on the site. Campaigners successfully fought off the last attempt in 2011. Local people have seen how the council have killed off other street markets in the area and don't want to happen here.

Newham is one of the poorest boroughs in the UK, with a large black and ethnic minority population. The market provides a range of cheap goods: a variety of fruit and veg, fish, meat, textiles and clothing, and other goods. It is hugely important to Newham people in many ways. It is a source of affordable necessities,



essential in such a deprived area. Many of these cater for the different cultural needs of this diverse area. Visitors not only come from other parts of London, but from as far afield as the Midlands and even abroad. The Market provides employment for traders and shopkeepers.

It is crucial as a public space where people who are often isolated, such as those looking after children, pensioners, and those on

benefits, can escape isolation. They can assess the best bargains, meet and chat with traders and other shoppers, have a tea or coffee in a café. The enforced isolation of lockdown necessitated by

the recent Covid pandemic highlighted the importance of regular socialising for most people, particularly in a society where the majority are increasingly atomised, with work-and-shop-from-home, the disappearance of community spaces such as libraries and pubs. This socialising is the culture that the council cannot or will not recognise: for them culture is only ethnic art and music, and religious festivals such as Eid, and Diwali. This rich cultural mix is also one of the strengths of Friends of Queens Market the 21 year old community group made up of traders, shoppers and activists, a diverse group of people who are fighting to save and improve the market.

For more info: www.friendsofqueensmarket.org.uk



Labour: governing for the rich

“The state guarantees the status quo: the wealth of the rich and the poverty of the poor.” - Mikhail Bakunin (1814-1876)

When Labour came to power one of its first acts was to refuse to scrap the two-child benefit cap. They followed this up by taking away the fuel allowance from ten million pensioners. At the same time it was revealed that Keir Starmer accepted a £19,000 donation for clothing for his wife Lady Victoria Starmer, but failed to declare this within the time limit prescribed. The donation came from millionaire Lord Alli, who has made his money from the media and investment banking. Another revelation was that Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves, key architect of the fuel allowance grab, received £4,400 in energy support since she was elected as an MP in 2010. Labour MPs received more than £400,000 in public funding to heat their homes over the last five years. MPs who have second homes in Westminster receive an unlimited free fuel allowance. This has left a sour taste in the mouths of many, not just pensioners. Under pressure from their members, the Unite and CWU unions put forward a motion calling for a reversal of the fuel allowance cuts on the Monday of the recent Labour Party conference. This was kicked into the long grass by Labour's leadership moving it to what is known

as the graveyard slot on the following Wednesday. Far from attacking the rich, the Labour government will concentrate on pushing through austerity measures that harm the poor. Collect all the tax evaded and avoided over the years by big business? Increase corporate tax? Shut down offshore tax havens? One per cent wealth tax? Increase windfall tax on fossil fuel companies? Stop up all tax loopholes? Nah, none of these will be implemented by Labour.



Labour promised union leaders to bring in workers' rights immediately on election. This should have included scrapping the two year probationary period during which workers could be sacked. Now though, Labour has compromised with the employers and will agree to a six month probationary period. Business Secretary Jonatan Reynolds briefed the press that Labour would consult with employers – not workers, of course – over a maximum probationary period. Meanwhile, Home Secretary Yvette Cooper moved to retain

anti-protest laws brought in by the Tories. Civil rights organisation Liberty won a legal challenge against the laws in May. Cooper has now launched an appeal against this. Meanwhile Labour is considering allowing magistrates the power to sentence to up to a year, twice the amount currently allowed. The Labour government is fearful of civil unrest with the austerity measures and attacks on civil rights it is implementing and looks towards increasing the powers of the State.

The Labour government and the union leaders are in agreement on workers accepting current public sector wage settlements. However, the news that members of the RCN nurses' union have rejected a 5.5% wage increase is an indicator that workers may not be ready to accept such a fix-up.

Labour wants to show big business that it is a capable administrator of the current system. Meanwhile billionaires in the UK have increased their wealth by 1,000 % since 1990, and the richest 1% own more wealth than the poorest 70%. It's not refugees, or doctors, or nurses, or train drivers, who have more than their fair share of wealth, it's the billionaires who tell us not to be so greedy.

Time to look towards independent working class organisation, free from the control of political parties, and looking towards revolutionary social change.

Reform UK: No Friend of the Working Class

Reform UK, led by Nigel Farage, claims to speak for the underdog and the disenfranchised and aims to grab working class votes. But a quick glance at that party and its backers shows that it is financed by billionaires with their own objectives, not those of the working class and the poor.

Farage himself, however much he makes himself out to be a man of the people, is from a privileged background. He was educated at one of Britain's poshest public schools, Dulwich College, and at the age of eighteen became a commodities trader in the City. He was a member of the Conservative Party until 1992. Meanwhile he calls on journalists to get out of their metropolitan bubble and relate to "real people." A millionaire, he is also the highest-earning MP, having made almost £1.2m a year from his programmes on GB News. This TV channel is co-owned by hedge fund billionaire Paul Marshall.

A visit to the USA on 17th July, costing £32,000, after the assassination attempt on Trump, was financed by Christopher Harborne, a crypto investor based in Thailand.

Richard Tice, the main payroller of Reform UK, a Reform UK MP himself, and until recently Reform leader until ousted by Farage, has financed Reform to the tune of several million pounds. He donated at least £500,000 during the recent election. Like Farage, he is from a privileged background. He was educated at posh Uppingham School. He is a multi-millionaire and runs the property investment firm



Quidnet Capital.

Another financier of Reform is Robin Birley, educated at the top public school Eton. He owns an elite club in Mayfair, frequented by Farage and Boris Johnson. He has donated £25,000 to Reform.

Another big donor is Zia Yusuf, who has donated thousands of pounds. He earned £31 million from selling his luxury concierge app Velocity Black in 2023, and is now Reform chairman. Richard Smith, who owns a company supplying electronic systems to the aviation industry, bugged Reform UK a sum of £50,000 in June.

Reform UK also received £10,000 from hedge-fund millionaire Crispin Odey. An investigation by the Financial Times revealed allegations of serious sexual misconduct, which he denies.

Holly Vallance, former singer and actor, is married to billionaire property developer Nick Candy. She donated £50,000 to Reform in June. Fitriani Hay, one of the biggest racehorse owners and breeders, similarly gave £50,000 to Reform. Previously she had funded Liz Truss's leadership campaign in 2022. She is married to James Hay, an energy magnate owning £325 million.

Ben Habib, formally deputy co-chairman of Reform, is another privileged property millionaire. He attended posh public school Rugby. He eventually entered the property business, after a period as a financial analyst for Lehman Brothers. He made millions as chief executive of First Property, and was previously yet another funder of the Conservative Party.

David Lilley gave £100,000 to Reform in June. He makes his money from investing in natural resources. He controls a series of companies that own 12,000 hectares of farmland in the Stavropol region of Russia, which produces cereals and oilseeds. He is chief executive of investment fund Drakewood Capital.

Rupert Lowe, Reform MP, went to another elite school, Radley College, and then worked in the City. He was appointed a Director of Rutherford Health in 2018 and Digme Fitness in 2017. Another Reform MP, James McMurdock, worked in the banking sector between the early 2000s until 2024.

These are the "real people" behind Reform UK, property developers, City speculators and elite members of the Establishment.

Reform UK is no friend to the working class and the poor. It wants to further privatise the NHS, scrap environmental controls and raise tax thresholds. It despises the poor it claims to represent. One of its MPs, Lee Anderson, another former Tory, sneered at people using food banks, and then later criticised nurses who were forced to use food banks, saying "they've got something wrong with their own finances."



Anarchist Communist Group

Email: info@anarchistcommunism.org

Facebook: AnarchistCommunistGroup

Twitter: Anarcommunists

Instagram: anarchistcommunistgrp

www.anarchistcommunism.org

WHO WE ARE...

The Anarchist Communist Group (ACG) is a revolutionary anarchist communist organisation which is dedicated to seeking a complete transformation of society, and the creation of anarchist communism.

This will mean the working class overthrowing capitalism, abolishing the State, getting rid of exploitation, hierarchies and oppressions, and halting the destruction of the environment.

To do this, we believe it is important to be organised.

We are committed to building an effective organisation that works towards the common goal of anarchist communism, in cooperation with other working class organisations and in grass roots campaigns.

We strive to base all our current actions on the principles that will be the basis of the future society: mutual aid, solidarity, collective responsibility, individual freedom and autonomy, free association and federalism.

If you want to join the ACG, then look first at our Aims & Principles on our website

www.anarchistcommunism.org

You can also drop us a line at info@anarchistcommunism.org

**New ACG stickers out now:
anti-racist, anti-rich, bosses and landlords, pro-migrant**

Order your bundle from londonacg@gmail.com

**Migrants don't put up
rents,
landlords do**



www.anarchistcommunism.org



Latest Issue of Stormy Petrel

**ACG
theoretical
journal**

**on
sale
now!**



Manifesto of Libertarian Communism by George Fontenis

Cost 3.50

New ACG Pamphlet



*All the above available from
the ACG website shop*

REVOLUTIONARY CLASS STRUGGLE NEWS