

**Tell your Union
that you want to :**

TAKE NATIONAL STRIKE ACTION TO PROTECT PENSIONS

(Martin Powell-Davies, Lewisham NUT)
2011 could be a decisive year for teacher trade unionists. Are we going to let our national conditions and pensions be slashed? Or are we going to take action to make the Government think again?

November's NUT Executive agreed unanimously that we prepare a campaigning timetable building up to a ballot for strike action in the spring term to defend pensions. But December's meeting put off any final decisions until the next

National Executive on 20 January. Since then, the UCU lecturers' union have confirmed that they will be balloting their members for pensions action in March. Surely we can't miss this opportunity to follow the students' action with a complete shutdown of schools and colleges in a united defence of our pensions? We should show our strength and make Hutton back-off before he issues his final Commission Report in late March. December's Executive took some important steps - asking NUT Divisions to carry out a 'clean-up' of their membership records ready for the ballot & agreeing the vote would be for 'discontinuous' action - not just a one day strike.

10 REASONS WHY IT'S TIME TO ACT:

- 1. Around £100 a month will be stolen from your salary.** Pension contributions could go up from 6.4% to 10% of salary. That's on top of a 'pay freeze' while inflation rises.
- 2. £70,000 more may be robbed from you over your retirement.** The switch from RPI to the CPI will hugely cut your total pension income during your retirement.
- 3. Yet more money could go in a new 'career-average' scheme.** Hutton is cooking up yet more ways of cutting our pensions. We need action to warn him off.
- 4. You might be 68 before you get your (cut) pension in full.** Normal pension age may go up to 65 for all - or even higher to match the rising state pension age.
- 5. If you choose to retire 'early' at 60, you'll lose £1,000s.** Retiring at 60 - or even 62 - would then count as 'early retirement' so that you would lose your full entitlement.
- 6. Our pension scheme costs are falling. This is just robbery.** Hutton's own figures confirm our scheme is affordable. Why should teachers' pensions be cut to pay off the bankers' gambling debts?
- 7. Most teachers are women - but they could be hardest hit.** Women are most likely to have breaks in pensionable service - and to live longer too.
- 8. We have a good pensions scheme - let's keep it that way.** If you're feeling the squeeze already, don't opt out of your pension - fight to defend it.
- 9. The threat of action made the last Government retreat.** Joint campaigns in 2005-6 forced Labour to retreat from most of its pension attacks.
- 10. Strike action can make this Government think again too.** The Con-Dems are unpopular and divided. Firm trade union action can defend our pensions.

Return your NUT E-Mail Survey

However, some on the Executive are still not confident - and they'll be looking at the results of an e-mail survey on the pensions campaign being sent to NUT members from January 6th. Please send it back - giving your support for strike action - so that the whole Executive can be in doubt what needs to be done.

**Action and
Change for
Teachers**



**FIGHT PUBLIC SECTOR CUTS
DEFEND PUBLIC SERVICES
NATIONAL CONFERENCE
SATURDAY 22ND JANUARY**

**11.30 – 3.30 pm South Camden Community School,
Charrington Street, London NW1 1RG**

**All anti-cuts campaigns, trade union branches, trades councils and
workplace organisations are invited to send delegates and visitors.**

The NSSN is the union rank & file body founded by the RMT in 2007. We have had national conferences involving hundreds of shop stewards and trade union workplace reps in the last period. We are also active at a regional and local level, and we aim to pull together all those workers in struggle against the attacks of the bosses. We had a very successful lobby and meeting of over 700 at the TUC conference in Manchester where we demanded that the TUC get off its knees and organise a national demo. of all public sector unions and community organisations against the cuts. In support of the general strikes and mass demonstrations taking place across Europe, our conference in June hosted an International Rally which was addressed by trade unionists involved in building those struggles. In London the NSSN has linked up with the regional bodies of the RMT, CWU, PCS and NUT branches to organise a demonstration on 23 October.

This ConDem government of millionaires has declared war on the public sector as it plans to cut massively the jobs and services of millions of working people. Hundreds of local campaigns against the cuts have already broken out, involving workers under threat of losing their jobs and those in the community who rely on these vital services. The NSSN believes that the conference's main role will be to pull together all those organisations, whether workplace trade unions or community based campaigns, to hammer out a fighting programme of action including joint industrial action to defeat the cuts.

**COME TO THE CONFERENCE
– TOGETHER WE CAN WIN!**

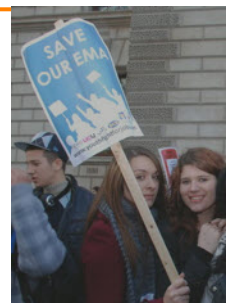
Save our EMA !

(Holly Smith, Lewes Stop the Cuts)

400 students, parents and children marched through Lewes, East Sussex, on 11 December to voice their anger at the proposed abolition of the Education Maintenance Allowance and at £9,000 tuition fees. The march, organised by local students and parents at Priory School,

passed the local constituency office of Lib Dem MP Norman Baker. Many people said they felt betrayed by Baker, and would not be voting for him again.

Many passers-by expressed support for the march, which has also helped launch our new local anti-cuts group.



**A ROYAL WEDDING?
No, a Royal Strike!**

(Paul Gerrard, Bury NUT)

15th December: Clitheroe Royal Grammar School (Lancashire) is totally closed by a solid strike of NUT and NAS/UWT in protest at the Head's plans to become one of Gove's new 'expressway' academies. Over thirty staff, reps from neighbouring schools and union activists held a static demo on the ring road in front of the school's sixth form centre, to hoots of support from local traffic.

Clitheroe is a market town in the relatively affluent Ribble Valley. The school used to be grant-maintained and still sports the 'Royal' in its name. But even here union opposition to academies, which will lead to worsening of terms and conditions in the future, finds a strong echo. UNISON members at the school remember that their pay went down under grant-maintained status, and the lesson is not lost on teachers. As their leaflet explained:

'The six unions above representing staff in the school would like to apologise to the people of Clitheroe & Lancashire. Not everyone in the school takes such a me/myself attitude to education at the expense of others. The available finance should be shared fairly. We are not in favour of helping ourselves by taking from others. Academies start the break-up of the Lancashire Family of Schools, much valued by teachers and parents across the County.'

The school will become an academy by January. But teachers have put down a valuable marker that the new status cannot be used to rip up previous agreements and that they have a strong workplace organisation.

Classroom Teacher

... is an initiative ...
by, and for, classroom teachers
... voicing the concerns and
experiences of classroom teachers
... so we can build action to win
change for classroom teachers

If you want :

... help organising a strong Union group in your school
... to share your views about the pressures teachers face
... to take action to defend teachers and education ...

Get in touch :

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