

NORTH DEVON LABOUR NEWS

RED LINES



BETTER TOGETHER; BEST AS EQUALS.

NEWS SHARED - VIEWS INVITED - CAMPAIGNS SUPPORTED

EDITOR'S WORDS

What a frantic few months we've had! Street stalls, marches, protests, parish and district elections, the MEP elections... It's certainly a bizarre time in politics, but I'm sure older members feel a vague familiarity with the climate.

We've been to some fantastic local events too. Members attended Stand Up To Trump rally in the Square and lots of us supported the brilliant Diversity Festival (organised by North Devon Sunrise) as well as Ilfracombe's fundraisers.

Keep a look out for upcoming events on our Facebook page.

North Devon Labour fielded the largest number of candidates they have ever done, and the Campaign team were out in force, but the mood of the electorate was divided and the only issue that seemed to be of interest was Brexit. We met a lot of apathy, but also anger and frustration.

It wasn't all doom and gloom, though! We had positive feedback about the Newspaper that went out and the videos that our new Communication Officer, Nick Agnew, created.

Overall a somewhat disappointing turnout, but we made some gains - we have three Parish Labour Councillors in North Devon! Speaking of whom...



Councillor Val Cann

INTRODUCING: COUNCILLOR CANN

So, May 2nd 2019. I was going to find out on my birthday if I was to become a District Councillor or a Parish Councillor or both or neither. Exciting stuff!

I knew that my chances of being a District Councillor were remote but I did stand a good chance of becoming a Parish Councillor. The Parish votes were counted on the Friday when I found out that I had indeed been elected as a Parish Councillor, the first Labour Braunton Parish Councillor for many years. Within moments Tracey (Parish Clerk) welcomed me and gave me my 'Braunton Parish Council -General Information For Councillors' folder. Well that was my bedtime reading sorted out for the next few days!

I was excited, apprehensive and surprised but I suppose the strongest feeling was pride and a determination to do my best to represent, with true Labour values, those that had voted for me.

My first Parish Council was fast approaching. I went into the Council Offices to meet Tracey

properly and find out what I needed to do in preparation for the meeting. She showed me round the chambers and answered a few questions that I had from my 'homework reading' and I felt ready and confident about my first meeting.

I decided to arrive in plenty of time so that I could get myself acclimatised and settled. I walked into what I expected to be an empty room only to find I was the last person to arrive! Ooops. I'll know next time.

It was a little overwhelming following the procedures and finding which piece of paper we were discussing but I soon began to feel more comfortable. I also know for next time what to expect and will be better prepared. I made a couple of comments (dog bins and planning!) but will build up slowly.

I then attended a planning meeting which left me feeling very frustrated that things that the Parish Council had rightly refused had subsequently been passed by the District Council. I need to find out a bit more about that.

I can now be found walking around Braunton thinking 'I'm responsible for that beautiful wild flower verge' and 'The village Green is looking wonderful - well done Parish Council'. It makes up for the odd Facebook comment about 'greedy g*ts lining their own pockets' in response to an increase in parking charges in the local carpark! Ah well, small price to pay for having the privilege of working for the village I have called home for over 40 years. Here's to the next 4 years!

CHARLIE SYNEK COMPLETES FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT PALESTINIAN MARATHON

"The only way to deal with an unfree world is to become so absolutely free that your very existence is an act of rebellion". Albert Camus

Charlie decided to raise money for MAP, or Medical Aid for Palestinians because she strongly believes that everybody has the right to three fundamental things: movement, education and healthcare. Of all three healthcare is at present most urgently needed in Palestine.

Charlie has written an amazing description of her experience **"Walls, Running and Houmous"** which you can find on the NDCLP email from which you found this Newsletter, or on the Facebook Members page.

Her journey to completing the marathon - less than 2 years after the birth of her youngest child - is incredible to read. It's a really thought provoking piece and I urge all of you to read it.

North Devon Labour contributed to her fundraising, as we all felt she deserved our support and MAP is a worthy cause.



Charlie (front left) and her new friend, Heather on the final stretch.

HELEN COOPER - CWU NEC



Following recent restructuring of the CWU (Communication Workers Union) Helen Cooper has been elected unopposed to the inaugural LGBT Seat on the National Executive Committee.

This is a part time role with a two year tenure of office. She's delighted to be the first person to hold this post and is looking forward to representing the Union's LGBT+ members and progressing their rights in these challenging times.

Congratulations, Helen!



Socialist smiles, rain or shine! Soggy members of NDCLP out leafleting for District Council Elections!

ARE YOU IN THE FACEBOOK MEMBERS' GROUP?

Join us on [Facebook](#) where we share ideas, make connections, and organise events!

GET MORE INVOLVED!

Have these inspired you to come and join us?!

We'd love to see some new faces out & about.

Can you help run our street stalls, or deliver some leaflets? Maybe you'd like to come out door-knocking and then join fellow socialists in the pub?!

Whatever you are able to do is fantastic and every little effort you make builds a stronger Labour movement, getting us ready for government!

Email us now:
admin@northdevonlabour.org

RED RAMBLE

A walk along the River Exe

Sunday 14th July, 11.00, Exford



Join us for our next Red Ramble.

Meet in the Car Park behind the primary school, TA247PP

The walk will take about 2 hours, followed by lunch in the pub for those who would like some refreshment Details on the North Devon Labour Facebook page under Events.

TRANSPORT!

We'd like to be able to support with transport to allow more people to attend meetings.

We are looking to arrange lifts for members who might need them so they can get to the CLP meetings, to help with events or to join in with street stalls.

Get in touch with Val Cann if you can help at all!
admin@northdevonlabour.org



PLAY THE NORTH DEVON LABOUR PARTY LOTTERY

Tickets are £4 per month. The winner gets £100

The winning number is the bonus ball in the National Lottery on the first Saturday of the month.

The lottery is a good source of regular income for the local party. It is a bit of harmless fun, you could win £100.

There are a few numbers left. If you would like to join in please contact the treasurer:

Martin Robathan
martin@robathan.org.uk



MERCH

We still have some of our North Devon Labour t-shirts available in limited sizes, so if you fancy one or know someone who does and deserves a gift, send us an email or put in an order at the next CLP meeting.

T-shirts are now reduced to £10 each.



WRITE TO US!

If you want to make your views about an issue heard, write to us. Any topic!

Send us photos of events you're taking part in or send as a flier for something you're organising!

We want to tell everyone about the great things our members are doing in North Devon!

We have a huge growing membership in North Devon, and we'd love to share your views across the constituency.

This is your newsletter and we'd love you all to contribute.

Perhaps you're enraged about the state of the roads in your area? Or are you concerned about the lack of resources and entertainment for young people?

Whatever it is, get in touch and we'll share your thoughts with the members via this newsletter.

email:
editor@northdevonlabour.co.uk



Steve Hinchliffe attended the Anti-Trump Rally in London adorned in his ND Jacket!

THE VIEW FROM SOUTH MOLTON.

So, a disaster of a local election. Sarah Nicholas and I were dumped in the District Council Elections and James Craigie, Sarah and myself managed to come 13th, 14th and 15th in a field of 15 for 12 seats on South Molton Town Council. So on the face of it, not great results, although I improved my vote from the last by-election.

The South Molton group still meets on the second Wednesday of each month and on our last meeting we analysed and took stock of the results. It seems that our time has not come yet in South Molton but we vowed to continue the battle to represent the Labour Party in the town.

Closer analysis showed that as a local builder, quite well known in the town, I was able to attract a higher percentage of the vote than my comrades. A renewed strategy to become more well-known in the Town will reap rewards.

Labour has never done well in the town and nobody can remember the last time that a Labour councillor was elected. We did some door to door cold canvassing in the Town and fared better than the results would suggest. We did detect a general disillusion with the Town Council so would have hoped to do better as new blood. There was still, however, amongst the few Labour supporters we encountered, little faith in our hero Jezzer (what is wrong with these people).

The challenges facing South Molton are no different to anywhere else in the West Country, housing, employment, education public services. What the population needs to realise is that the Labour Party is the only Party that can deliver, again, no different to anywhere else in the country. But anyhow, I just realised I am, of course, preaching to the converted.

It just remains for me to remind folk of upcoming dates of activity in South Molton.

Informal meetings at the Coaching Inn
7.30pm
July 10th, Aug 14th

Street Stalls, Pannier Market 10am till 12
July 20th, Aug 27th

All welcome from anywhere.

In addition, on the first Saturday of each month we intend to go out canvassing.

Any date changes to be posted, watch this space.

So I am just going to sneak back into South Molton before I am missed.

Solidarity,
Steve Hinchliffe



TRIAL BY FIRE

Nick Agnew

Being a fairly recent Labour Party member, the local elections on May 2nd were my first experience, not only of campaigning, but of standing as a candidate. Given the national political climate, it is no surprise to me that these elections were challenging to say the least! However, although we may not have made the gains we might have hoped for under different times, we have everything to be proud of, especially our elected councillors. Having campaigned mainly in Braunton, I thought it might be useful to share some of my experiences and observations.

I won't dwell on the results, or the national sentiment towards the Labour Party. What struck me was the positive, thoughtful and informed campaign Labour ran across North Devon. For us in the two Braunton wards, visibility was a key issue. We know that tactical voting has been and still is an issue of epidemic proportions in the wards and so it was vital to reach as many

people as possible not only to deliver our pledges and try and counter the tactical voting argument, but also to make sure people saw 'red' and associated it with the elections. And at this we were successful. Through a mix of street stalls, leafleting and a strong social media campaign, we had a great reach in Braunton East and West. Every house in the wards received a leaflet about the candidates, as well as the tabloid style North Devon Labour newspaper. We were able to engage with people at the stalls, and received a lot of positive feedback and some interesting discussions. Our social media campaign was targeted at local residents and delivered relevant videos and information about Labour and the campaign. In the weeks leading up to May 2nd, there was a constant stream of Labour material reaching voters in Braunton East and West.

In the long term, making sure Labour is consistently visible and engaged in the community and local issues will mean that voters will see Labour as being a serious contender at elections, and the temptation to vote tactically will reduce. During our campaign, particularly on social media, we encountered a fair amount of hostility and differences of opinion. But this is good, because it means we are reaching people, and the people who disagree with our principles inevitably shout the loudest. Between now and the next General Election, whenever that may be, we will not be quiet. We will use the momentum created by the elections to broaden our social media campaign so that we are fully prepared by the time the next election comes around. And we now have our most valuable asset of all – the amazing Councillor Val Cann! She will be a magnificent Councillor and we are all very proud of her. Congratulations Val!



WILL OF THE PEOPLE?

Four months have passed since I wrote some thoughts on democracy and the will of the people – on the problems that arise when a simple question with huge implications is put direct to the electorate in the form of a referendum. At that time back in January there was much debate on whether the wish of 17 million people to leave the EU should be binding on the Government even though 15 million would see that as destroying our future.

In that paper I expressed my deep reservations against the growing demand for a second referendum by people hoping to override the first with a different result. At the time David Cameron asked Parliament to call the referendum I thought it was a very bad idea for a host of reasons set out in my January paper. My chief objection is the one I quote here:

“The very concept of a referendum as an instrument of democracy is deeply flawed for the simple reason that it appears to give power to the voter but comes with no responsibility...”

“Governments are rightly held accountable for consequences of their actions as are individuals in their private lives. It is this and only this that serves as a brake on recklessness. When the choice between alternative courses of action is handed over to the people to decide, who is accountable for the outcome? Not the individual voter who remains free to blame others for subsequent consequences.”

I now find that the record shows I was not alone in having these concerns back in 2016. Nineteen Labour MPs, including John McDonnell and Jeremy Corbyn, voted against the bill that called the referendum. If their wisdom had been more widely shared, the Country would not be in the mess that is now proving so difficult to resolve and our democracy would not be under such serious threat.

Theresa May has at long last faced up to what has been obvious to most people for over a year now. She will be gone by the end of July - but the impasse will remain. Her more passionately Brexit successor

will be chosen by the members of the Conservative Party – a tiny fraction of “the people” that is far older, far more white, and far more male than the electorate as a whole.

When Boris Johnson or one of the other hopefuls takes over, the parliamentary arithmetic will be just the same. The sovereignty of Parliament remains absolute. A new Conservative Prime Minister will not have the votes to take this Country out of the EU without satisfying a significant number of MPs that the damage to our economy will be brief and slight and that there will be no hard border with Ireland.

If the current Parliament is the problem, then why don't we change it? Our constitution used to allow the PM to call a General Election at any time and historical precedent says that this has always been the way forward when a Government lacks support in the House by failing to govern responsibly. It is only David Cameron's Fixed Parliaments Act of 2011 that prevents Parliament from forcing this issue now unless they can muster a two-thirds majority – easily blocked by even a minority Government that wants to hang on to the levers of power.

This two-thirds concept was clearly understood by Cameron as a way to insulate the status quo from major change in governance being triggered by knee-jerk reactions to a transient crisis like that of the influx of workers from Poland. What I find easy to understand but impossible to justify, is that Cameron's call for the referendum on EU membership failed to include this very same stabilising safeguard even though the issues at stake will affect generations to come – far greater in its import than a weak Government being made to call a General Election that it doesn't want.

I find it oddly perverse that Theresa May should be hiding behind this new constitutional law when the manifesto on which she was elected in 2017 contains a commitment to repeal the Act itself. This pledge was made at the very moment when she was exploiting that very same Act to call the sort of opportunistic snap election it was claimed to prevent.

How bizarre is that?

May's greatest crime, shared by her Cabinet, has been to blame the MPs for the current impasse while blocking the very way in which our British Constitution provides for them to be called to account. This is the very height of irresponsible hypocrisy.

A British Prime Minister is required to serve the best interests of the Country as a whole not just the tiny cohort that gave her the job. If she is so scared of “the people” then neither she nor her successor as Conservative leader has any moral right to hold the reins of power to themselves. So, having made quite clear what I think should happen, what do I now think to be the most likely course of events?

What I speculated back in January was:

“For any leader faced with a situation like this within a business or family situation, the enormity of implications coupled with the intensity of strongly held opinions would leave only one responsible course of action. The whole issue would be postponed for now and set aside to be revisited something like five years hence.”

I see no prospect of anything so sensible being put to Parliament by a new Conservative Prime Minister. I think those happy to contemplate a no-deal Brexit genuinely believe that the EU 27 will back down and agree to a deal in which the country gets the right to negotiate its own trade deals while retaining the benefits of those already negotiated on our behalf by the EU. They also believe that some magic can preserve the EU customs frontier with the rest of the World while avoiding a hard border in Ireland. In treating these issues like cards to be played in a game of poker, they are mistaken. These are existential issues for the EU and the 27 are not minded to open the doors to such folly.

So what can a new Prime Minister do that's different to May's repeated failures? The answer is “not a lot” without a fresh mandate from the Country. “Go for it Boris – let's see how many of the people choose to trust their future in your hands.” Let's see his manifesto put to the people alongside other party's plans to deal with all the urgent matters that need to be addressed. Let's have a new set of MPs that represent the Country as it is now.

I don't know what a new Parliament would look like but I'm sure it would be significantly different from the one we have now. Do I think this will happen?

I see three possibilities:

1. The complex mix of views represented in Parliament will manage to force a General Election for October. The parties have had their conferences and after much bad-tempered wrangling have decided on the manifestos they will put to the electorate. Labour backs remain and the new Parliament has Labour as the largest party but short of an overall majority. A coalition is formed with a platform to revoke article 50 and for the state to pull the railways and water back into public ownership together with a raft of anti-austerity and climate-friendly policies.

2. A Boris Johnson Government takes a tough line with Brussels and is rebuffed. Talks are broken off with each side blaming the other. The 31st October deadline slips by and we are out with no deal. The initial shock appears to have been absorbed as things seem to return to normal in the new year, but a string of problems leave trade talks in disarray and bad economic news begins to build. Anger and frustration grows apace and in the 2022 General Election the Conservatives lose over 50 seats but Labour remain short of a working majority, the far right feed on the anger and the Country is more divided than ever.

3. A Conservative Government accepts Labour support to negotiate EU agreement to a further extension allowing for a referendum asking voters to choose between no deal and remain. There is a narrow majority for remain and article 50 is revoked by Parliament. The Conservative Party explodes with anger at betrayal and those held responsible are driven out while support for the Labour Party haemorrhages in many northern cities – though not in Manchester. At the 2022 General Election a new far right party with Farage as front man emerges as the largest party.

The split in this Country is now more starkly drawn than ever before between those consumed with blame and anger and those with more thoughtful concern for our future as a small nation in a scramble

for the finite resources of a planet under threat. I feel that Labour's noble search for unity by compromise that began at last year's conference has now run its course. The horror of a no-deal Brexit now looms large and voting in the EU elections falls well short of any assurance that a second referendum would deliver a clear national will to remain.

At this juncture I feel that our only hope of avoiding descent into even further austerity and anger rests with those Tory MPs that might be prepared to bring down a Johnson led Government and force a General Election. Without that, I fear there is nothing we nor the Labour leadership can do but remain focused on keeping the Party together for the battles ahead. One thing is for sure. If we do crash out of Europe, the people who voted to leave will have even less control over their lives as we become further exposed to the ruthless greed of global corporate predators.

And now I come to what is for me the most vexed issue of all. This is not a matter of principle or of policies – I know exactly where I stand on those. When it comes to principles, the most important is democracy. I remember Tony Benn saying on many occasions that the first thing you need to know about any government or leader is how we can get rid of them when they let us down. As for policies I see an urgent need to hold rampant global corporations in check. Market forces driven by the demand for profit in the short term are impoverishing us all. We need a Government that will take back control of our railways, and water while recognising that our economy can't thrive when starved of investment because too much capital is locked up in non-productive property.

Where things get difficult is on tactics. The last Labour conference showed great democratic wisdom in its unanimous support of a tactical approach that sought to minimise the damage of a hard Brexit. Like so many other attempts to extract some compromise from Theresa May, this tactic has reached the end of the road. It is time to move on but I reject the argument that we should just stop demanding a General Election and come out demand a second referendum instead. The only argument against demanding a General Election is that it's

not going to happen because no Conservative MP will vote for an election they are certain to lose.

So what's different about a second referendum? Those same people will only let it happen if they think it will reinforce the case for leaving with or without a deal. Much of the call for Jeremy Corbyn to place demand for a second referendum at the top of Labour's policy is driven by a belief that this might strengthen the campaign to remain. I don't think it would alter the national arithmetic at all. It would make a lot of Remainers happy for a few days, many of whom voted Lib-Dem last week, but it wouldn't make a second referendum any more likely.

There is one thing more important to me than staying in the EU and that is having a Government that will actively resist the global market forces that are impoverishing this Country and its people, sucking vast sums out through corporate profits and property acquisition. My only hope for this is a healthy, united Labour Party and this is my top priority.

Having said all this, I think that the Country is now so divided that there is no room left for sensible compromise. The Labour Party must now commit fully to the remain side of what has become a binary argument. We will lose support from angry people who have been led to believe that politicians and all our democratic institutions are the cause of their misery, but this loss of support is a reality that we must accept. Now that our very reasonableness has been thrown in our face, we must hold fast with that majority of our actual members who can see through all the lies and see a better future for us within the EU than outside with Donald Trump and his "America First" policy as our best friend.

While I would be content for Jeremy Corbyn to say something similar, such a shift in policy would have to be backed by the Shadow Cabinet and national Executive Committee as well as a formal canvassing of constituency parties and I think this is now a matter of the greatest urgency.

Harry Ellis

THE MYTH OF AUSTERITY

In this piece, I explore the myth of austerity and I do not apologise to any supporters of capitalism and neoliberal economics for the avoidance of the term 'economic growth' as we face a climate emergency created by the relentless extraction of the earth's resources in the pursuit of profit which benefits the few and not the many...in other words how can we have continued expansion of the economy when the earth's resources are finite?

The Dogma of Austerity

Despite 120 years passing since the first May Day workers' rally, we are still involved in the struggle between labour and capital. For the past 8 years we have seen the ravishes of an unnecessary dogma called austerity which can be linked to 120,000 extra deaths between 2010 and 2017 with cuts to NHS and Social Care dubbed economic murder as Garry Leech, a writer said in his book "Capitalism - A Structural Genocide". This death rate equates to 48 people per day or 2 people every hour in the UK.

Thanks to research by the Equality and Human Rights Commission we can see the impact of austerity in Britain with changes to all tax, social security and public expenditure since 2010 and the impact this will have up until 2022. The EHRC forecast is gross inequality with the poorest set to lose more than 10% of their incomes whilst the richest will lose barely 1%. Families with a disabled child will be amongst the worst affected with some taking a £5,000 reduction in income.

The Tory Government have continually peddled the idea that the cuts are being shared fairly and further that owing to the complexity of working out the impact of multiple policies, there is no real way of measuring the impact of these policies on various sectors of the community. The equalities watchdog, EHRC report confirms that both these claims are entirely false. The chair of the Commission, David Isaacs says, "We have encouraged the Government to carry out this work for some time, but sadly they have refused - we have shown that it is possible".

Frances Ryan writes in the Guardian that the Tories may not want the public to know these facts, but thanks to the EHRC it is there in black and white: while the wealthy are being protected, eight years of austerity is inflicting harm and hardship on Britain's poorest.

What is GDP?

Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

GDP = the sum of the following;

- 1) Consumer spending - what we spend on goods and services
- 2) Business investment
- 3) International trade income - the balance between imports & exports
- 4) Government spending

So it can be seen that GDP increases with government spending - under the Maastricht Treaty it was recommended that no country should have debt higher than 60% of GDP. However, historically our debt has been higher for most of the time and in 1945 was 261% of GDP - we had no money but still we built the welfare state, the NHS, pensions and council housing. Most of our trading partners have a national debt higher than ours.

So austerity is a political choice and not an economic necessity - it favours the well off or the rich. Tax is not needed by government to spend on public services - government spending does not rely on tax revenue, it relies on political will to spend. Tax is only used to regulate what we have to spend and prevents us from spending or outstripping supply which causes inflation. So when VAT was increased to 20% this unlike income tax was a fixed tax which had a proportionally higher impact on lower earners. Higher rate of tax at 83% in 1975 was reduced to 40% so we have a resulting increased wealth gap. The GINI - Coefficient measures economic inequality - we are one of the most unequal societies in the west (source: OECD).

Austerity

What is it in economic terms? The recession of 2008 was the trigger for UK and European governments to embark on a policy of austerity - that is a cut back in government spending to

reduce the government's debt or deficit. Despite the current government's claim of investing more in the NHS, the reality is that NHS investment as a percentage of GDP has reduced since 2009 - this is one of the real impacts of austerity.

What caused the recession of 2008? Banks, by lending more than their capital reserves, whilst at the same time speculating on investments which relied on low inflation which encouraged more risk taking with no regulation on lending - investment or loans housing and property leading to huge increases in the price of housing, large amounts went into the financial sector which imploded with the stock market crash of 2008. Only 8% of this new money went into business outside of the financial sector.

31% went into residential property pushing up house prices more than wages

20% went into commercial real estate (office buildings etc)

32% went into the financial sector the same markets which imploded in 2008

8% went into credit cards and personal loans.

Eventually the debts became unpayable. Lending large sums of money into the property markets pushes up housing prices along with the level of personal debt.

Interest has to be paid on all loans that banks make, and with debt rising quicker than incomes, eventually people became unable to repay their loans and banks find themselves in danger of going bankrupt.

Campaign against Austerity

And as austerity came out of this chaos, the Occupy movement became the voice of anti-austerity campaigners with the 'Occupy Wall Street' campaign in Sept 2011 and Occupy groups which were set up in more than 100 cities. Occupy activists railed against economic inequality using social media to spread their message. Earlier in 2010 'UK Uncut' claimed that clamping down on tax avoidance was a creditable alternative to public sector spending cuts. Then in 2013 The Peoples Assembly against auster-

ity was launched, supported by the major trade unions, the Green Party, the Communist Party and trade union activists. It was the Peoples Assembly and Health Campaigns Together that organised the mass rallies in London during March 2016 and February 2017 against austerity and in support of the NHS.

Austerity can be self defeating where in a recession governments who cut spending have seen a large fall in nominal GDP. For example in 2011, Greece had a fall of 6% in GDP which led to a shrinking of tax revenues and ratio of debt to GDP continued to rise. In other words austerity which is supposed to reduce debt, has failed to reduce debt and caused the GDP to fall.

Austerity as we can see applied in Greece arises from the demands made by the Troika, which is the European Commission, the European Central Bank and The IMF. The Troika insisted that the Greek government cut pensions by 40%, reduce wages, and sell off public Utilities to the private sector. This can only be described as capitalist rape and is a reflection of a capitalist crisis. Even with these measures, which only favour private capital and the banks, Greece still have a debt equal to its entire economy or GDP, that is debt is 100% of GDP. Even the IMF has argued that the Greek debt should be written off on the basis that the debt would never be repaid, but the EC and ECB refused as they did not want to set a precedent in Europe. EU managers in Greece reduced the tax exemption level for workers, who have already suffered at the hand of austerity measures, but still no tax increases for those who can afford it.

Myth of Austerity

Now I would like to expose the myth put over to us by the government that the cuts in public expenditure are necessary because they have exceeded their budget in the same way that a household is limited on its spending by the amount of income, in other words has to live within its budget. This restriction on spending does not apply to a government, especially in a nation

like ours where we have our own currency and a central bank and the government can raise all the money that it needs.

Government spending would in turn raise the GDP and austerity or cuts in spending have the opposite effect. It is also a false premise that the government can only raise money through taxation. Every time the government spends a pound the GDP increases in relation to the debt.

This alternative approach of investment or spending creating better public services is outlined as part of the Labour Party Manifesto and one of the reasons that John McDonnell gets a good reception from the business and even banking sector.

Peoples lives would matter

Finally it can be argued that there is no need for austerity - it is a politically driven option which only benefits the wealthy and punishes the rest. What we need is public expenditure on National Health, Education and all public services and would not have to put up with a diminished private mental health service due to their need for profit and we would not have to watch people dying because the government does not want to provide essential services to keep them alive.

Life could be so much better with everyone able to enjoy a life of quality and fulfilment with thriving communities where everyone matters and is cared for.

Ian Crawford



Hello Campaigners,

If you are attending the Tolpuddle festival for the weekend (20-21 July), can you spare an hour on Saturday or Sunday on our Save Our Hospital Services stand in the marquee?

Volunteers are needed to pass out literature and campaign materials to visitors at the stand in the marquee. If you can help for an hour or so, please contact - Chris East:

**Email: chriseast87@gmail.com
Or text 07867 501291**

Please send through your times of availability before 28th June.

Thanks!

Ian



EVENTS

What's coming up in North Devon?

TRANSPORT MEETING

Saturday 29 June, 10.30am

Northern Devon needs better public transport. Want to do something about it? Come to a get together at Lunch Box, Church Lane, Barnstaple and start to plan a campaign.

FACEBOOK MEET UP

Tuesday 9th July

Discussing Climate Change on the ND CLP Members Facebook group.

RED RAMBLE

Sunday 14th July, 11.00

A walk along the River Exe with Socialist friends.

PILTON GREEN MAN

Saturday 20th July - all day

This is always a great family day out, with brilliant and eclectic music gigs, fun activities, face painting, stalls and rides.

We'll have our regular Labour stall there with our awesome windmills, excellent record collection to sift through and epic book & puzzle sale. If you'd like to help, pop along!

TOLPUDDLE MARTYRS

Sunday 21st July - all day

Barnstaple TUC have organised transport. Departures:

Bideford 8.15 Kingsley Statue,
Barnstaple 8.45 the Square,
South Molton 9.15 Conservative club.
£10 per adult, children free.
Returning at approx. 9pm

Message, call or email:

Gerry Sables
01271 373338
0784 8007826

gerrard.sables@phonecoop.coop

DON'T FORGET!

Our next CLP meeting is on Thursday 18th July at the Castle Centre, Barnstaple at 7pm.

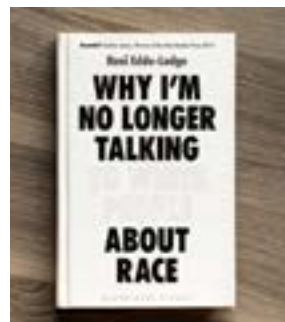
CLP meetings are a great opportunity to meet other members, to get your voice heard, to debate ideas and to get more involved in your local party.

We're a friendly bunch, and we tend to have a trip to the pub afterwards!

See you there!

WHAT WE'RE READING

People have been raving about the fresh outlook Reni Eddo-Lodge takes on race relations and has brought to the mainstream. It's a subject that is discussed in the media, is "covered in a month" at school, but rarely gets prolonged attention.



Her provocative title might put off people who aren't willing to challenge their own beliefs or privilege, but that's exactly why she's given it that title. It's meant to make you feel uncomfortable, to question why she's given up.

Reni wants white people to acknowledge their privilege. She discusses this in detail and gives anecdotal & personal examples of where white privilege happens, including conversations with friends and she shares their collective and individual experiences candidly.

She's precisely right to have stopped talking to white people about race – it's not people of colour's job to teach us. We need to educate ourselves.

Why not send us in your own book review? editor@northdevonlabour.co.uk



The North Devon CLP Newsletter is YOUR newsletter.

If you would like to contribute - whether that's an article of interest, a success to celebrate, or if you've got an event to publicise that Labour members might be interested in supporting - please get in touch with the editor: editor@northdevonlabour.co.uk

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Pic:
[North Devon Conservative Party HQ: Aspirations Or Clairvoyance?](#)

By Malcolm Cowburn