

# Leicester Muckery

Your local scurrilous, rebellious working class bulletin - Issue 1 - April 2023 - FREE

## Profit & Loss



We've seen and read about the steady rise in prices over the last year or so, particularly in energy and fuel, but especially in the cost of food, which is rising at the fastest rate in more than 45 years. This is hitting Leicester hard with its low wages and more than 22,000 households without work.

Milk is up 42%, sugar 38%, cheese 35%, bread 20% and vegetables by 18%. These aren't exotic imports from the other side of the world but daily necessities for working people, all grown and produced around us. You can't lay the blame as politicians will try on Brexit, the war in the Ukraine or the Covid pandemic.

**Profiteering Supermarkets**  
Look instead at the profiteering by supermarkets. The big three, Tesco, Sainsburys and Asda doubled their combined annual profits to £3.2 billion in 2021, an increase of 30% since the arrival of Covid.

Will they return these profits to us as customers by lowering future prices? The answer is no. Instead they are handing over cash taken from us to their already well-off shareholders. Tesco paid out £704

million in dividends to its shareholders in 2021-22.

You may think these pay-outs will be taxed, albeit at a lesser rate than the income tax we all must pay. But, just like the energy and oil companies do with their enormous profits, the big supermarkets have found a way to transfer huge sums of money from ordinary working people to the already very rich 1%, tax-free.

### Wealthy Investors

Whether it's BP, or Shell, or Tesco, they all run schemes to buy shares back from their wealthy investors. Shell and BP paid out £31 billion to their investors last year, and most of this was by buying back shares. By April this year, Tesco will have returned over £1 billion to shareholders instead of reducing all-time high prices for us, their cus-

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tomers. By buying back shares they boost the value of remaining shares and so investors' wealth increases without paying any tax.

Corporate greed, and corporate theft from the rest of us. Just don't expect to read or hear about this in the media or expect any action from the Government.





# Where there's muck...

Welcome to the first issue of the *Leicester Muckery*, your free local, independent working class bulletin. We're starting small with just 4 pages but hope to increase size in future issues.

## So why "Muckery" then?

It's a term we've heard a few times when people refer to the local evening paper. So, it's a bit of a piss-take nod to that particular publication. As you read on, you'll see that the collective that runs the *Muckery* have views that are far different to those you'll find in most regular news publications, local and national (check out the back page to see what we're all about).

But there's also the old saying, "where there's muck, there's brass" and this city of ours has its very own muck with some people doing well out of it. You'll find dodgy politicians and unscrupulous bosses with their snouts in the trough. Also, there are bigoted lowlifes, all keen to punch down at those less fortunate, those they don't like because of their background, skin colour, immigra-

tion status or the way they happen to live their lives. To find examples of this mindset, just check out the comments sections on the *Leicester Mercury* website—actually, on second thoughts, *don't* do that (or you'll need to take a long shower to wash off their muck afterwards).

In contrast, the *Muckery* proudly punches up and targets the powerful, those who exploit, the entitled and the bigoted.

But more than that, we want to break down some of the apathy and despair among many working class people in the area. We want to push the idea that together, working class people can be unbeatable and can achieve a better life through simple acts of solidarity and mutual aid. In short, the *Leicester Muckery* wants to encourage a general culture of working class resistance right here in the city.

**If you'd like to get involved and participate in the Leicester Muckery Collective, then drop us a line. Our address is on the back page.**

## Strikes, strikes and more strikes

**With all the rising prices, the cost of living crisis and crap below-inflation pay rises (in reality pay cuts), there's been loads of strikes up and down the country.**

We've seen nurses, posties, teachers and lecturers, civil servants, bin workers, bus drivers, rail workers, and many more, who have all been out and fighting for an income that can at least pay the bills, fill up the fridge and maybe have enough for the odd night out, a chippy tea and even a holiday. Our favourite strike winners have to be those security staff at Fawley Oil Works in Southampton who won a massive 31% pay rise and the Sheffield Cutlery workers who won a stonking 44% increase! A big well done to all concerned there who really stuck it to their money-grabbing employers.

Meanwhile, the Tory government and His Majesty's Loyal Opposition (i.e. the Parliamentary Labour Party) are not at all happy. And most national newspapers and other news media are keen to talk down the strikers. Many of these publications and news channels will go out of their way to suck up to the government and the big bosses and corporations who are coining it in.

This is while the rest of us have to make-do or go without. After all, why can't us plebs just knuckle under, tighten our belts and do as we're bloody well told!

### Direct Action

This is the reason they attack us in this way. Our ability to withdraw our labour and go on strike is our best weapon to improve our lot. It directly challenges the bosses by hitting them where it hurts—in their profits. Direct action like this, as long as we stick together, delivers the goods. Indirect action, or relying on others to do things for us, rarely gets us much beyond a "thanks but no thanks". So, striking is a thousand times more effective than voting for politicians, a million times more effective than writing to your MP, and a billion times more likely to get results than begging management with your cap in hand. Okay, so we made those numbers up but you get the point.

Put simply, when workers don't join together and fight together by striking for better wages, working conditions and a better life, then we really can't have nice things. The less we are willing to fight, then the worse it gets.



Let's face it, there's bugga all chance of getting much by asking most employers and politicians nicely.

If you have any doubts about this, just remember, how did we get paid holidays, a five-day working week, free healthcare, social security, and many other social and economic benefits? By workers fighting for it with strike action or the threat of strikes. *None of these were given to us freely.* And when did many of these things start to deteriorate to the current state of the NHS, the general low pay, longer hours and working conditions and some of the strictest anti-union workplace laws in the whole of Europe and other parts of the globe? Exactly when we fought less, took less strike action and didn't act in our own interests as working class people.

It's time to turn all this around. **Up the workers!**



# Labour pains in Leicester

We here at the *Leicester Muckery* have little time for politicians of all stripes. And while we recognise that the Tories are pure evil and should be attacked at every opportunity, how this publication views the Labour Party is a little bit more complicated. After all, there are good, well-meaning and active working-class people in the Labour Party. These are people who would like to see a better society than the crooked system we live under now. Though we might disagree on a few fundamentals, these are people we'd still have much agreement with on many issues. So, readers who fall into that category, you are not the problem.

## The problem is...

The problem is what the Labour Party is *not*.

Labour is not a working-class party but is a party of the bosses. It's a party of the rich, shareholders, bankers – the 1%. It's also a party of past governments which might have made the odd improvement here and there, but it never had any real interest of changing the rotten system to something fairer and more equal. But then why should it? That's never been its job.

Sure, Labour likes to play the working class card. It originally grew out of the trade unions and many unions still like to keep that connection going. But let's face it, the Labour Party is no friend of the unions and is more than happy to shit on the workers and our unions.

If anyone is in any doubt about this, just look at Sir Keir Starmer's recent attitude towards striking workers and his recent glowing reference to Margaret Thatcher. Just look at how many of Thatcher's anti-union laws were repealed by the

last (Blair/Brown) Labour government. Answer: it was a big fat zero. So, can you imagine how many of the even more vicious anti-union, anti-strike laws brought in more recently by the Tories will be repealed by the next Labour government? Well, with Starmer in charge, we're really not holding our breath for an incoming Labour government to beat that miserable zero.

## So, what's the score in Leicester?

Nationally the Starmer regime has been busy booting out anyone who's remotely left-wing from the national Labour Party and is de-selecting any MPs who don't toe the Starmer line. Similar things have also been happening here in Leicester.

Nineteen Labour Councillors have been deselected by a national Labour Party panel without consulting local members. Meanwhile the Labour Group has suspended four Councillors, two of whom subsequently resigned. The Corbynista Memorial Rump on Twitter thinks it was an anti-leftist purge, the Black and Asian communities think it was racist and women that it was misogynist. Some believe the purge was to pre-empt a move to set up a Leicester branch of the Hindu nationalist and anti-socialist BJP in the city.

It was possibly all of these, or none of them. The common thread is that these Councillors opposed City Mayor Soulsby to some degree. He has been telling the media he had nothing to do with the regional panel deselections and the Labour Group suspensions. Of course not, it's just coincidental. This is Soulsby's hidden grip on the party machine after 35 years of leading Labour, in the city and



beyond.

Some of the de-selected Labour councillors have switched to the Greens, some to the Tories, and some intend to stand as independents in May's local elections

## The Muckery says...

We won't tell you who to vote for because that's not where the real struggle for working class people is. What counts is that working class people in Leicester start building grassroots community organisations and get organised in our workplaces. In other words, join together to fight back.

That said, if you do happen to vote for the Tories or some of the other far right deadbeats, then you are clearly a nasty piece of work.

## Kicking off in France!

Well done to all the folks in France for showing us how it's done. Mass strikes and millions taking to the streets against the Macron government's attempts to raise the pension age is something we here can only dream of. It's about time we stopped giving the UK government such an easy ride!

# Leicester Muckery **Mental Health & Community**

**Firstly, this is not professional advice. If you're suffering serious mental health issues you must contact a professional.**

Many people at some point in their life will experience mental health problems. Some use medication or talking therapy to alleviate their suffering. One solution to mental health issues however is not talked about as widely. That is the community, and how talking to others about your problems in a sensitive way can help.

Many people face mental health alone or with professionals who can only deal with the problem within the system set-up. This system is often underfunded and always under-resourced. Successive governments always promise more help for the mental health sector but have continued to not follow through with the money needed for services. The grassroots community however can help. In a world where we are becoming more and more isolated from each other, the community could be a key answer.

Many voluntary or charity organisations are set up to take up the role of the state. Again, this can help, but the community is more than this. Community can mean the

simplest of things but may mean a lot to a person. Family, friends, or just the kindness of strangers can help. Meeting someone for a coffee and chat. Or building a group of like-minded people to join up and take part in an activity that will keep you busy and your mind more settled can also help. Most people don't just like receiving others' company but enjoy giving company to others, especially at hard times.



Remember, you don't have to talk directly about your mental health condition, that's your choice. You can just talk about things that interest you. It doesn't have to come from some intense love for someone. It can just come from mutual respect. We can have our different opinions and we can still talk about how we feel without getting into an argument. It's good to listen to different points of view. Most importantly, take your time.

## IF YOU ARE STOPPED BY UKBA\* OFFICERS IN THE STREET

(\*IMMIGRATION OFFICERS)

- You are **FREE TO LEAVE** at any time
- You **DO NOT** have to answer any questions
- You **DO NOT** have to give your name and address
- You **DO NOT** have to show them any documents or ID
- You **DO NOT** have to let them search you



Immigration raids are happening nearly every day.

The Anti Raids Network is a grassroots network of people challenging these raids. Join the resistance & stand with your neighbours & communities.

[www.network23.org/antiraid](http://www.network23.org/antiraid)

## **The Leicester Muckery is a working class bulletin**

### It stands for:

- **Ideas and actions** based on mutual aid, solidarity, collective responsibility, individual freedom, autonomy and free association.
- **It sees things** in terms of bosses and workers, the powerful and powerless, rich and poor, order-givers and order-takers, oppressors and oppressed. In short, *capitalism*.
- **It fights** against such a system.
- **It supports** actions and ideas that increase working class confidence, autonomy, initiative, participation, solidarity, equality, self-activity and unity of the working class in the face of capitalist exploitation and oppression.
- **It opposes** actions and ideas which divide the working class – such as nationalism, racism, sexism, homophobia and the view that we should aim to rise above our class.

**Instead, we should rise with our class!**



Leicester Muckery is printed and published by the Leicester Muckery Collective (LMC)

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