

Newsletter

of the *Alliance for Green Socialism* – March 2010
www.greensocialist.org.uk/



ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Saturday 27th March 2010

The eighth annual conference of the AGS is from 11am to 5pm on Saturday 27th March at the Calthorpe Arms on Grays Inn Road, Kings Cross, London (map overleaf).

Individual members are entitled to attend, move motions, speak, and vote. Policy motions must be in to the Secretary by 12 March.

A simple pooled fare will operate, so everyone pays the same to get there. Last year no-one had to put in more than ten pounds. Accommodation is available in London for those who want to stay over Friday or Saturday

There will be a social immediately afterwards, through to 11pm, with some food and music, plus the opportunity to tell the members of the national committee what they should do better.

General Election

The general election is almost certain to be on Thursday 6 May 2010 The AGS expects to stand candidates in at least Clwyd West, Kensington, Leeds East, Leeds North East, Leeds North West, and Scarborough & Whitby.

There is still time to consider additions to this list, to give more electors a genuine choice.

The AGS will also be standing candidates in local elections.

Alliance for Green Socialism,
Freepost NEA 5794, Leeds LS7 3YY
www.greensocialist.org.uk

Secretary: Celia Foote
celiafoote@nasuwt.net 0113 262 4667

Editor this issue: Mike Davies
info@greensocialist.org.uk 07811 384888

Strategy Review

On the first weekend in June the AGS National Committee will hold a weekend workshop on the strategic direction of the AGS. All members are welcome to attend and contribute.

The workshop will look at how the AGS seeks to achieve its aims. It will look at lessons we might learn from recent attempts to engage with other left and green groups; the extent to which we involve ourselves in single issue and direct action campaigns; standing in elections; membership; and whatever those attending think relevant to our attempts to make a political impact.

The workshop will be in Leeds on Saturday and Sunday 5/6 June. Overnight accommodation will be available for anyone who needs it. More details in the next newsletter.

Welfare State demo 10 April

Public service unions and campaigns are joining in a march and rally to protest against the privatisation of the welfare state and cuts in services.

The march takes place in London on 10th April. Assemble 12noon for 1pm, Temple Place, Embankment. Rally 2pm (ish!) Trafalgar Square.

We urge members to go if they can—and try to prevent this being another union organised fiasco.

If you can go and are willing to leaflet for the AGS, please let the Secretary know.

Supporting an independent

On 18 February there was a local council by-election in Hyde Park & Woodhouse ward in Leeds. The AGS nominated a candidate of our own.

The local *Leeds Schools Together* campaign (which the AGS supports) persuaded a parent to stand as an independent, primarily on the platform of opposing the closure of a local school. Interestingly enough, Childrens' Secretary Ed Balls had written to Leeds demanding the closure of the school, and Education Minister Vernon Coker wrote later congratulating Leeds on deciding to do so!

Leeds AGS decided to withdraw our candidate in favour of Adele Beeson, the local parent. The AGS went further, providing Adele with an agent, lots of organisational assistance, and lots of help with leafletting and so on.

In polling day Adele got 7% of the vote. That's probably more than an AGS candidate would have got. Also it gave the AGS a useful "in" to the local community.

On the other hand, although the AGS agreed with Adele's stance on the school closure and other local issues, the campaign said little or nothing about socialism or the environment, and those involved did not flock to join the AGS.

Was withdrawing our candidate the right decision?

What's the AGS been doing?

National

Letters to media on climate change, capitalism in football, postwar welfare state settlement; manifesto distribution; organising conference.

London

Fighting attempt by local housing trust to redevelop and privatise.

Across the country

Chichester & East Hants: meeting regularly
Epping Forest: great new year social; quiz night; working with local residents association; successful AGM

Leeds: three meetings monthly; supported independent in by-election; preparing for general and local elections; press letters.

Rugby: Xmas social

AGS Manifesto

The AGS general election manifesto is our strongest yet. Can you give, send or even sell a copy to a local organisation or a friend? For copies, contact the Secretary.

Do you know - or can you think of - any national figure to whom we could send a copy and who might be interested. Trade union, professional, media, arts or even politics. Please tell the Secretary.

National Committee meetings

Meetings of the national committee are normally open to any member to observe. Meetings are on Saturdays, most often at the Calthorpe Arms on Grays Inn Road, Kings Cross, London.

Please note that the June meeting, which was to have been in Epping Forest, has now been changed. It will be a week earlier on 5 June in Leeds. There will be an extended meeting in Epping Forest later in the year

