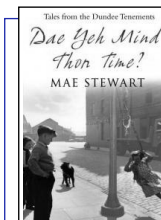




PUBLIC WORKS
takes on
the political
fight p3



THE WAVE
COME TOGETHER TO STOP CLIMATE CHAOS
GLASGOW 5.12.09
Full details page 4



UNISON's
Mae Stewart
writes tales
from the
tenements p3

PUBLIC WORKS:

a million
voices
for
change

October 2009 No. 81

Scotland in UNISON

scottish council activists bulletin Copy sections of this bulletin or the online version to use in local newsletters

Public Works: we all need to do our bit

by Chris Bartter
and Kate Ramsden

UNISON Scotland has launched its 'Public Works' campaign with the message that public service cuts will increase costs for ordinary families and will delay economic recovery.

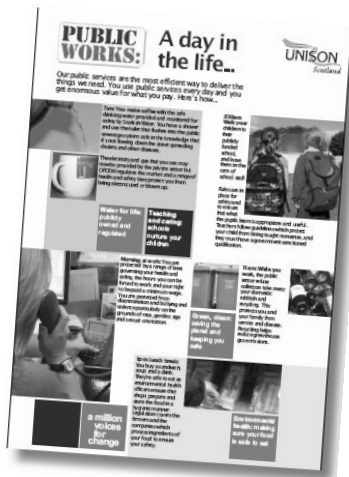
'Public Works' is the Scottish arm of the union's 'Million Voices for Change' campaign and branches and members need to play their part in getting the message over.

UNISON has warned that the headlong rush to cut and privatise public services will lead to delays in coming out of recession.

It has produced a leaflet demonstrating the importance of public services to everyone's lives and pointing to the huge costs that would fall on people if public services were not available.

Matt Smith - UNISON's Scottish Secretary, said, "A day in the life..." follows an average woman through her day and points out our dependence on public services - from water and sewerage, through environmental health and refuse collection, to education and health care.

"It points out that all of us rely on public services, not just the most vulnerable, for whom they can be a lifeline."



'A day in the life...'
follows an average
woman through
her day and points
out our
dependence on
public services

What can you do?

Matt added, "We are keen to involve members in this campaign. After all we are both the front-line providers of public services and the users of public services."

"Who knows their importance and their value better than us?"

"We are asking you all to sign up individually to the 'Million Voices' campaign at national level."

"We would also like you to tell us what you do in your job and why it is important. And tell us your own experiences of using public services - how they



Photo: Rich Pictures

A fantastic performance by the Carluke Flute Orchestra at the New Lanark Fun Day - a great success for the North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire and Lanarkshire Health branches.

See www.unison-scotland.org.uk/newlanark.html

have supported you and your families."

Average family gets £10k in public services

Affordable and value for money: Matt warned, "We need to get across the message that if these services are cut

back or privatised the increased costs of paying for them individually can only increase the cost burden on hard-pressed families.

"We estimate the average household gets more than £10,000 a year in benefits and public services. **turn to page 2**

I've added mine!

'We need public services so that... whether young or old, people can maintain some form of independence at home, treated as an individual.'
Gail Coughlan, Occupational Therapist, East Ayrshire Branch

'Public services matter to me because they are a mark of our level of civilisation, cohesion and compassion as a society.' John Boyce, Edinburgh

'In times of need, people should be able to turn to professional organisations which are able to help them. By downsizing and restricting our Public Services, the government are perpetuating the greed and ill conceived ideas brought on to us by the financial institutions. We need investment in public services, not cuts.'
Strathclyde Police and Fire Branch - has your branch signed up?
www.unison.org.uk/million

'If ever there was a time to invest in public services, it is now. Not only are public services at the heart of a caring society, they form the key for stimulating local economies and bringing us out of the recession.'
John Stevenson - SiU Editor

MSPs add theirs - page 3

Give the 'Jobs, Justice, Climate' message to world leaders

by Fiona Montgomery
Information Development Officer

How often do you get the chance to put your views across to the finance ministers of the world's richest nations?

On Saturday 7 November in St Andrews, hundreds of people from a massive coalition of organisations will be urging G20 ministers meeting there to accept that business as usual is not an option.

Scottish Secretary Matt



Smith has urged branches to take the opportunity to join the important 'Jobs, Justice, Climate' rally on the beach in St Andrews.

At this time of economic and environmental crisis, the Put People First coalition says existing policies reinforce high levels of poverty and inequality. PPF wants the G20 to:

- Rebuild our economies so they deliver decent jobs & public services for all
- Eradicate the scourge of global poverty and inequality
- Create and invest in a green economy that preserves the environment for our children and the natural support systems of our planet to prevent runaway climate change.

Matt said: "UNISON played a key role, along with other trade unions, in the Put People First demonstration in London in March for the G20 leaders' summit."

"Here in Scotland, we are particularly well placed to step up pressure on the G20, given that Prime Minister Gordon Brown, Chancellor Alistair Darling and International Development Secretary Douglas Alexander all represent Scottish constituencies."

Turn to page 2

PUBLIC WORKS!

From page 1

“Public delivery provides value for money through economies of scale and stopping shareholders taking profits out of the pot.



“A year’s domestic waste collection sourced privately would cost around £2,500, and the average cost of a year’s education outside the public sector in Scotland is around £8,200.”

Important for the economy

“But it is not just that public services are essential for all of us. They also play a key part in the economic well-being of our communities. Cuts in public sector jobs, pay and pensions will only lead to less money being spent to stimulate the economy, and if public services were cut they would order and contract less with the private sector.

“Far from being the drain on the economy argued by those who created the economic crisis, the public sector contracts for supplies and services from the private sector - especially important when private industry faces reduced order books.

A just and fairer society

“In addition money spent in the economy by public service staff will not be there if we accept the advice of the right wing think tanks to cut jobs, pay and pensions.

Now is the time to build a fairer society based on social justice, good jobs and quality public services. It is up to all of us to highlight the importance of public services and to get across the message that Public Works!”

G20 at St Andrews

7 November

from page 1

“The Put People First demands, including decent jobs and public services for all, fit very well with our Public Works campaign, part of UNISON’s A Million Voices for Change campaign.”

The day in St Andrews will begin at 11.30 am with a rally on the beach and a fun photo stunt. You are advised to wrap up well!

The ‘People’s Summit’ continues with a range of speakers, workshops and cultural events at St Andrews University. These will explore positive alternatives for a global economy that puts people first.

Speakers include Kevin Dunion, Rector of St Andrews University, Jan Bebbington, Vice-Chair of the Sustainable Development Commission in Scotland, and Sister Rosemary, Director of St Monica’s, in northern Uganda, a project working with child/young mothers who were forced to become slave wives when they were abducted by the rebel Lord’s Resistance Army. Also speaking will be Colin Hines, member of the Green New Deal group, author of ‘Localisation - a global manifesto’ and former co-ordinator of Greenpeace International’s Economics Unit

The afternoon will end with a free screening of the film *The Yes Men Fix the World*.

You can also make your voice heard by emailing your MP asking her/him to write to Alistair Darling calling for strong action on Jobs, Justice and Climate at www.foe-scotland.org.uk and click on the link.

Edinburgh UNISON and UNISON Scotland are running a bus from Edinburgh to St Andrews.

Full details about the G20 Road to St Andrews event, with background information, travel timetables and a downloadable ‘People’s Guide to G20 Action’ are at: www.g20standrews.org

Organisers are keen to have an idea of the numbers planning to come so please have someone from your group email g20@jubileescotland.org to say how many you expect to attend.

Education support staff conference to be held in Edinburgh

UNISON’s Education Issues group has arranged a conference for education support staff to take place in Friday 30 October 2009 in the Barceló Edinburgh Carlton, North Bridge, Edinburgh.

Open to all education staff, and branch officers, the conference will discuss: Additional Support for

Learning, Roles and Responsibilities of Classroom Assistants, Qualifications and CPD, SSSC and Registration, and Education Budget Cuts.

There will be keynote speakers from the Scottish Government, the SQA, UNISON and CoSLA.



If you want to be a delegate, get in touch with your branch right away.

Racism shown the Red Card in Perth and Kinross

Free St Johnstone Squad posters are to be handed out to Saints supporters before the club’s home game against Rangers as part of the Show Racism the Red Card Fortnight of Action.

Perth & Kinross UNISON branch has teamed up with St Johnstone FC, the Community Safety Partnership and the local council to sponsor the posters.

They will also renew sponsorship of a Show Racism the Red Card advertising billboard at St Johnstone’s McDiarmid Park stadium.

The posters were launched on Monday 12 October by Councillor Elspeth Maclachlan from the Community Safety Partnership and Hamid Rasheed of UNISON.

Hamid said: “UNISON is at the forefront of anti-racist campaigning and we are delighted to renew our involvement with Saints in this Fortnight of Action.”

The posters will then be distributed to fans by volunteers before the game



l to r: Murray Davidson, midfielder; Euan McLean, keeper; Kevin Moon, midfielder; Paul Sheerin, midfielder; Hamid Rasheed, UNISON; Derek McInnes, Manager; Councillor Elspeth Maclachlan, Community Safety Partnership; David McPhee, Perth & Kinross Council

versus Rangers on Saturday 17 October. They will also be handed out to members of the ‘Junior Saints’ supporters club.

As part of the Fortnight of Action, St Johnstone youth players will take on Mental Health service users in a small game on 20 October. At the end of the fortnight St Johnstone players will ‘show racism the red card’ prior to

their away fixture against Kilmarnock on 24 October.

The Show Racism the Red Card Fortnight of Action runs throughout Scotland from October 16-31.

It encourages participation from all sections of communities to celebrate diversity and tackle racism. A major aim of the Fortnight of Action is to encourage anti-racist actions, events and

initiatives to take place throughout the year.

Billy Singh, Manager of the Scottish Show Racism the Red Card campaign said: “This initiative will help us to promote our anti racist message. There is a growing determination within Scotland to tackle this scourge and we all have a role to play. Ignoring racism is accepting racism.”

Bill didn't just inhabit the Scottish political world - he bestrode it

Bill Speirs - 1952 -2009
a tribute by Chris Bartter

Former general Secretary of the STUC and friend of UNISON, Bill Speirs died in late September after a long illness and a final long stay in hospital.

The Scottish Trade Union and political world gathered at Renfrew Town Hall on 1 October to celebrate his life.

More than that - it was a gathering of Scotland’s civic society - for Bill touched so many lives.

He was an internationalist who campaigned ceaselessly for Scottish working people; an uncompromising socialist who always insisted on a ‘broad church’ approach to politics; an atheist who could call on religious leaders across the spectrum of belief; a football fan (he always claimed it was St Mirren!) who was also enthusiastic about cricket - his ‘switch-

hitting’ innings for Daft Watty’s Ramblers are still the stuff of legend!, and an economic analyst who spent years running 7:84 and sitting on the arts council.

The ceremony - scripted by Bill himself! - included speeches by George Galloway MP; Campbell Christie; Jack McConnell MSP. First Minister Alex Salmond was also there.

Brought up in Renfrew he attended John Neilson’s Institute, and then went to Strathclyde University, where he graduated with a first class honours in politics. After a variety of ‘interesting’ jobs - lecturing, bar work, ice cream salesman - he joined the STUC in 1978 as Assistant General secretary. Working in the research section he gradually rose through the ranks to become General Secretary in 1998. He stood down in 2006 to



devote more time to international campaigning - unfortunately he was not given that chance.

It is perhaps as Deputy to Campbell Christie that his main work was done. Bill became the powerhouse of the STUC’s campaigning during this time. It was then that many of the alliances with politicians, trade union activists, church leaders, councillors, and voluntary sector organisations were formed in campaigns for South Africa, Palestine, Caterpillar, Lee Jeans, against the Poll Tax and of course for a Scottish

Parliament - possibly the thing he could be most proud of when - as general secretary - he welcomed its opening.

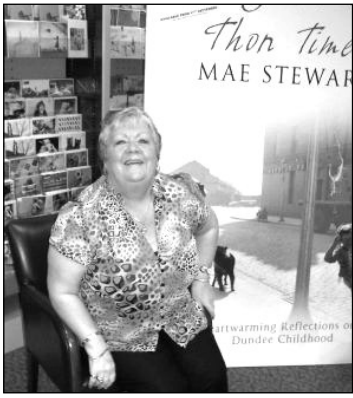
He was a huge friend to UNISON and strongly supported campaigns to back Scotland’s public services and their workers.

Many officials and activists have told of his direct backing for their local disputes.

He will be a great loss to UNISON and to the wider world.

UNISONScotland sends its support and sympathy to Bill’s wife Pat, to his brother and sister, Brian and Seonaid and to his son and daughter, David and Jaki and to his first wife Linda.

Bill didn’t just inhabit the Scottish political world - he bestrode it. See www.unison-scotland.org.uk/billspeirs.html for more tributes.



UNISON's Mae Stewart becomes author!

Dundee Retired Member Mae Stewart writes and produces the UNISON Scotland Retired Members' Information web pages. If that wasn't enough to keep her busy, she has now published a book, launched last month at Waterstones in Dundee.

Mae was brought up in

Dundee in the 1940s and 50s. It was a world without television, inside toilets or electric light but full of fun, adventures and some fascinating characters.

In Dae Yeh Mind Thon Time?, Mae now recounts her childhood years in way we can all relate to and recalls the women who brought her up,

days at the Washies, high days, holidays and the daily routines of life.

Dae Yeh Mind Thon Time? is a nostalgic look at life in the tenements and a candid and affectionate excursion down memory lane. The book is available from Waterstones and other good bookshops.

Voluntary work with children threatened as government cuts disclosure agency

Staff at a body set up after the Dunblane massacre face the sack as government funding is to be cut to less than half that needed.

Staff at the Central Registered Body in Scotland (CRBS), set up by the Scottish Government on a recommendation by Lord Cullen's report on the massacre, were told on 5 October that they had five days to opt for voluntary redundancy or face compulsory redundancies.

The body, run by Volunteer Development Scotland (VDS) and funded directly by the Scottish Government, enables voluntary organisations that work with children to register and get disclosure checks on volunteers and employees free.

UNISON said that they had been told by the Chief Executive, George Thomson, that government funding had been dramatically cut - leaving the body £115,000 short for 2009/10.

James Douglas, Stirling Branch Secretary of UNISON, who represent the staff at CRBS said, "This is a disgraceful cut by the Scottish Government, which will hit both dedicated staff and valuable services to our kids.

"Providing such a vital agency with less than half of their required funding threatens most of the staff with either voluntary or compulsory redundancy.

"If this happens the work of CRBS will immediately start to pile up, and eventually voluntary organisations - especially small ones - working with children will be unable to get volunteers or staff checked, they won't be able to use them, and in many cases will have to close."

The union is also questioning the management of the crisis by VDS. James said, "To pressure staff to take decisions on their whole future in less than five days, to impose a pay freezes whilst still engaging expensive consultants shows the wrong priorities.

"Before rushing headlong into compulsory redundancies CRBS and VDS need to point out to government the implications of their cuts, and to talk to staff unions about alternatives."

PUBLIC WORKS:

takes on the political fight

by Chris Bartter
Communications Officer

In the wake of the high profile visits to the Labour and Tory Conferences by the million voices for change, Public Works has begun to take the message to the political world in Scotland.

Early in October, UNISON hosted a drop-in event at the Scottish Parliament as part of the STUC organised 'Trade Union Week' to ask Scottish MSPs to add their names to the million voices. 14 MSPs came along to add their support, and some of them had their picture taken doing so.

Matt Smith, who also led a discussion with MSPs on the budget the previous night, said,

"Our arguments about the importance of public services to the people of Scotland and to the economy of Scotland are clearly striking a chord with politicians. We will continue to seek supporters both in Parliament and in the population in general."

The next stage of the campaign takes it to Inverness, and the SNP conference. In addition to the stall and encouraging politicians to sign up publicly, UNISON will be holding a joint fringe with the Association for Public Sector Excellence, (APSE) on the value of public services in a recession.

Scottish Convenor Mike

Kirby said,

"We will be promoting the urgent need to maintain and improve public service funding. In the teeth of political and media consensus supporting cuts, UNISON will be standing up for the need for good public services - both to deliver services in a time of increasing demand, and to provide the economic stimulus needed to grow the economy out of recession."

A similar fringe will take place at the Scottish Greens Conference in Dumfries at the end of October.

What you can do

There are many things that members can do to back up the campaign. Specifically UNISON is asking members to sign up to the Million Voices campaign - encourage your members to log onto www.unison.org.uk/million

As well as that UNISON Scotland is looking for stories that we can use to publicise how good our public services are.

If you or your members have experienced good service from our public services - drop Chris Bartter, Malcolm Burns or Kay

I've added mine!



Cathy Jamieson MSP



Tricia Marwick MSP



Malcolm Chisholm MSP

Photos: Malcolm Burns

Sillars a note to let them know
c.bartter@unison.co.uk;
m.burns@unison.co.uk; or
k.sillars@unison.co.uk.

These same people are also looking for details of the job that you (or your members) do and the way that helps the public.

Perhaps you help kids with learning difficulties; check that food and premise are safe and hygienic, or ensure that public facing staff can carry on with that job by doing the important background work. Let us know and pass the message out to your members.

Glasgow college nursery closure back on as management breaks promises

UNISON has accused the management of Glasgow College of Nautical Studies of bad faith and breaking promises as it emerged that the college plans to close its Thistle Street nursery in July 2010, with the loss of 54 places and 19 jobs - using compulsory redundancies.

A further nine places have already gone with the closure of the Baby Room on 24 September.

The union called off industrial action on 20 August in return for a commitment to a joint review of nursery provision

UNISON will resist compulsory redundancies - Scott Donohoe

by both the college and UNISON.

Scott Donohoe, Assistant Secretary for UNISON's Glasgow City branch said, "The promises of management, the commitment to a joint review and the whole consultation process in this exercise has been a complete sham.

"Members called off planned industrial action in good faith, with a college commitment that UNISON would be involved in a joint review of the nursery provision and it would remain

open until July 2010 at least.

"Despite a number of business plans being forwarded that predicted a balanced budget, this commitment was blatantly abandoned by the college.

"It is now quite clear that the college always intended to close the nursery despite the constructive views and input of UNISON, the staff, MSPs, parents etc.

"It is also clear that this service cut has always been



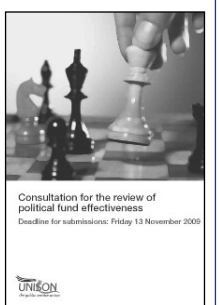
driven by the prospective merger of city colleges and this demonstrates the lack of commitment in these merger plans to the provision of affordable childcare arrangements for staff and students given the current economic climate.

"Members have already demonstrated their commitment to action in defending this service, and we give notice that UNISON will resist compulsory redundancies with all means at our disposal."

The union is also writing to the Secretary of State for Education and Lifelong Learning to raise the issue.

Political fund review under way

UNISON's consultation for the review of the political fund effectiveness is under way.



Branches and other union bodies are being asked to feed in views by Friday 13 November.

See www.unison.org.uk/fundreview

Robert's credit union goes national

A credit union started by a UNISON branch secretary in one branch, has just gone national!

The Southern General Hospital Credit Union was started by Robert Rae, then UNISON branch Secretary along with other staff representatives 11 years ago.

Its 'common bond' (people who were allowed to join)

was the staff of the SGH in Glasgow.

Last week, the Secretary of State for Health, Nicola Sturgeon MSP announced the Credit Union would now be open to all NHS staff in Scotland! Robert - now a temporary Regional Officer for UNISON - was delighted.

"When we started this CU I knew it would be a good

service for the SGH staff, and if it was successful we could maybe spread it to the other NHS staff in Glasgow. I didn't anticipate it going national!"

A Credit Union is a mutual organisation set up to allow groups of people with a common bond - like an employer, or a geographical area - to save and borrow money without relying on

banks or, even worse, loan sharks.

They are particularly useful to groups who do not have access to banks, but the non-profit base means that the rates are better than traditional banks and can be useful to anyone.

The SGH CU expanded to take in the staff in the rest of Glasgow's NHS after reorganisation and now is open to all NHS staff.

Black workers meet MSPs in trade union week

The STUC Trade Union Week event 'One Scotland? Representation and Participation of Black Workers', chaired by UNISON's Sofi Taylor and organised by Migrant Rights Network, STUC UNISON and UNISON Overseas Nurses Network saw over 30 Black members taking part.

MSPs from all the major parties showed solidarity with the unions and with Black Workers in particular. For a full report by Nahid Aslam see the website and click on Black Members.



UNISON calls for action to reduce assaults on workers

UNISON Scotland has called for decisive action from public sector employers and the Scottish Parliament to reduce violent assaults on members in the course of their work.

A UNISON report on 'Violent Assaults on Public Service Staff in Scotland', presented to the union's annual Health and Safety conference in Stirling, has found that more than 25,000 assaults on staff were recorded for the year 2008/09 (see website and click on health and safety).

Although the total is down on the previous year, UNISON is concerned that the overall number of assaults remains stubbornly

high, and completely unacceptable.

In particular, the total for local government has increased, although in health and other sectors, some reductions have been recorded.

Dave Watson, UNISON Scottish Organiser said, "A reduction in the headline figure on violence against staff is welcome - but any act of violence on a member of staff going about their business of providing vital public services is completely unacceptable.

"To have over 25,000 in a year is shocking. And we are concerned at the continuing increased level of attacks on local government workers.

"It is clear that where rigorous monitoring and

active preventative measures are in place, this has resulted in improvements.

"But some employers are clearly failing to monitor violent assaults effectively, and as a result are failing to do enough to protect their staff."

The Centre for Healthy Working Lives has established a Task Group to develop best practice guidelines for reporting assault statistics for local government. The group, including representatives from CoSLA, some individual councils STUC and UNISON Scotland, expects to report soon.

UNISON's local government branches will then seek negotiations in each authority on how the proposals are to be

implemented. UNISON Scotland is also campaigning for further legislation to protect public service workers.

Dave Watson said, "We campaigned successfully for extensions to the provisions of the Emergency Workers Act 2006, which resulted in community health and mental health nurses being included. But more needs to be done.

"We want a broadening of the scope of the law to include other public facing staff, such as social workers, housing staff and traffic wardens.

UNISON Scotland will be working with Hugh Henry MSP on his proposed Workers (Aggravated Offences) (Scotland) Bill published in June.



by Fiona Montgomery

Information Development Officer

The Wave on Saturday 5 December, in Glasgow, will be the biggest climate change demonstration Scotland has ever seen.

Scottish Organiser Dave Watson has called on branches to join the thousands of people who will be marching for a fair global deal from the United Nations talks taking place in Copenhagen.

The Wave, organised by Stop Climate Chaos Scotland (SCCS), takes place at the same time as a massive London sister march, also called The Wave, and other demonstrations around the world. The key demands from the Scottish event are for the UK Government to

● **Share Scotland's Ambition**, by building on the world-leading Climate Change (Scotland) Act

● **Protect the Poorest**, 300,000 people are already dying every year as a result of climate change impacts

● **Act Fair & Fast**. It is only fair that rich countries like the UK act first and fastest to cut their emissions. Making deep cuts in our emissions straight away reflects our historical responsibility for climate change.

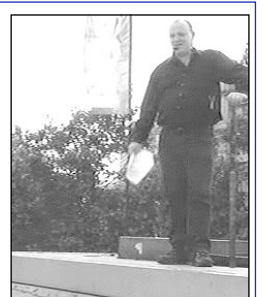
SCCS has lots of ideas about helping mobilise for the march and is also keen to hear from you if you can help with stewarding. Full details about mobilising, stewarding and downloadable posters and leaflets are all at www.unison-scotland.org.uk/greenworkplace along with the full version of this article.

Also, you can send an 'Armie' E postcard to help tell people about The Wave and about Scotland's Climate Change Act. www.foe-scotland.org.uk/thewave

For further information please contact Fiona Montgomery on f.montgomery@unison.co.uk

Kevin on the Plinth

UNISON Scotland's Kevin O'Neil promoted 'a million voices for change' on the Trafalgar Square Plinth last month. See the video at www.unison-scotland.org.uk/publicworks



As election looms can we remember how bad it was before?

As the run-up to a General Election approaches, the temptation might be to say 'a plague on all their houses' but the risks for public service workers are too great to just stand on the sidelines.

SiU has focussed on pensions recently for the simple reason that Tory leaders have been explicit that final salary schemes will go.

So there's at least one reason why public service workers should start thinking about the election.

And by the way, it might be worth telling anyone who cares to listen that 'final salary' does not mean your *whole* final salary as some pundits seem to think. That would be good, eh?

Then what about the economy? Whether you like the government or not, most experts now seem to agree it got it just about right to

OPINION: SiU editor John Stevenson warns that who wins the election will be critical for public service workers

avoid disaster - despite other parties opposing.

But should public service workers - who don't get big bonuses, cheap mortgages and big pay rises when things are going well - have to pay for all that when the fat cats screw up?

Of course not. But that is exactly what David Cameron is suggesting with his pay freeze and public sector cuts. If public sector pay is to match the economy, I want to know where my big pay rises went when things were going good.

One of the advantages of the average age profile of UNISON members is that lots of us can remember the Thatcher/Major

years. So here's some memories.

Interest rates of 15%, mortgage repayments doubling, sitting there for ages and never below 8% for more than six years. People having to sell up because they never imagined their mortgage would shoot up so much. That's hard to believe now but it's worth remembering if the state of the economy will influence your vote.

You might want to hear from the independent Institute for Fiscal Studies, who say that "direct tax and benefit changes made by the previous Conservative governments acted to increase income inequality, whereas those made by since 1997-98 have benefited the poor by more than the rich".

The greed of those who got us into this mess is not new. The foundations were set in the 'yuppie' days of the 80s and early 90s. The destruction of

manufacturing and communities on one hand while financial greed at the other was elevated to a virtue - and we are still paying for it.

And what about our public services? Remember the NHS 'safe in their hands'? With forced privatisations, internal markets, cheapest is best, and make a profit by cutting wages - hardly.

Oh, and the Poll Tax. Enough said.

Invest in services

UNISON has been consistent that the only way out of recession is to invest in services, boost the economy and get us working again.

And it's not just UNISON saying it. Professor David Blanchflower, an ex member of the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee, told the Telegraph, "We must not repeat the mistakes of the 1930s by assuming a recovery is taking

place and then cutting spending and raising interest rates too early. Such action could push the economy into a decade-long depression."

So, if any of us public service workers are thinking that it's time for a change - or perhaps we're so fed up we were not going to vote - maybe it's worth thinking about what will happen to our services, our pay, our pensions, our jobs.

The election will be critical for all of those.

We want to hear your news

SiU is your paper, we want to hear your stories. Contact: John Stevenson (Editor) 0131 220 5655, Chris Bartter 0870 7777 006, FAX PRESS RELEASES to 0141 331 1203 E-mail: webmanager@unison-edinburgh.org.uk