





Surrey County Branch



UNISON Office Room G17, County Hall
Penrhyn Road, Kingston-upon-Thames
Surrey KT1 2DN
Tel: 020 8541 9091

 unison@surreycc.gov.uk


www.surreycountyunison.org.uk
www.unionsoutheast.org.uk


www.facebook.com/SurreyUNISON


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1 March 2018



RALLY AGAINST AUSTERITY IN THE RUNNYMEDE CONSTITUENCY OF CHANCELLOR PHILIP HAMMOND MP (nearest station Egham)

Saturday 7th April at 2pm (speakers to be confirmed)

Surrey County UNISON branch, with the support of the South East Region of UNISON, have organised a rally against austerity and against low pay. We decided to hold it in the constituency of the current Chancellor, Philip Hammond as this government’s Chief Austerity Minister. Runnymede is also the site of the signing of the Magna Carta, declaring the ‘Rights of Man’ – including the right to protest.

The last 10 years have seen average incomes plummet – particularly in the public sector. Many workers now take home wages worth 15-20% less than ten years ago.

UNISON are campaigning hard for a serious increase in minimum wage rates – Surrey County Council and most public sector bodies still pay less than the UK Living Wage Foundation (LWF) £8.75ph as a minimum. The county council are aiming to achieve the government’s target of a £9ph minimum wage by 2020 – UNISON believe this is not ambitious enough given the clear levels of in-work poverty across Surrey which have been reported by the Community Foundation for Surrey (CFS) and covered in the Surrey Advertiser. We call for a £10ph minimum wage and a breaking of the pay cap in the public sector.

The recent report by CFS, ‘Surrey Uncovered’ shows that in-work poverty in Surrey has grown considerably over the past four years and that 10% (22,640) of Surrey children currently live in poverty. This will be mirrored across the South of England. Foodbank use has also shot up fourfold in the last eight years – the highest increase in use being by people in work!

www.surreycountyunison.org.uk

General Secretary: Dave Prentis Regional Secretary: Maggi Ferncombe Branch Secretary: Jane Armitage

A recent report by web-blinds.com (reported in the Surrey Advertiser) suggests that you would need to earn £85ph to be able to afford the average house in Surrey. Only the chief exec and four senior directors are on that sort of money. The rest of us struggle by on very little.

We are calling on all trade unionists in the area to support this protest – bring your banners, book transport, spread the word. Let's show Hammond that workers are not going to sit back and do nothing while austerity continues to be imposed on us. Let us know that you are coming and if you want a speaker.

We are still waiting for final confirmation in terms of assembly points etc. for the day and we will be mostly using our Surrey County UNISON Facebook Page and website to keep people updated. Please check our FB page regularly here: <https://www.facebook.com/SurreyUNISON/>

For more information, contact me on paul.couchman@surreycc.gov.uk or call our office.

Yours in solidarity



Paul Couchman
Branch Secretary elect