



# tubeworker

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RMT REGIONAL  
ORGANISER ELECTION:

VOTE  
**STEVE  
HEDLEY**

We need a Regional Organiser  
who will make the union:

- more relevant
- more effective
- in touch with  
rank-and-file members
- more democratic

**STEVE HEDLEY is the only  
candidate who will deliver this  
- his record proves it!**

## PULLING THE PLUG

As we write, shift testers are striking against EDF Powerlink's refusal to give them pay parity with day workers. The strikes run for 36 hours each from 19:59 Sunday 16 November, and from 19:59 on Sunday December 7. They are also refusing to stay on at the end of shifts unless it is a life-threatening emergency.

RMT members voted 21-2 for strikes and 22-1 for action short. They may be a small workforce but they are potentially very powerful, as their job involves identifying and repairing faults at London Underground's sub-stations - and there are more than 250 of them!

The strike deserves all our support - which it why it is a bit worrying that it has had little profile around the rest of the job. The union needs to publicise it more to its members in other grades. And RMT safety reps should be advising members of the potential safety implications of the strikes and the circumstances under which we might refuse to work on safety grounds.

## ECONOMIC CRISIS: WE NEED A WORKERS' PLAN

During this economic crisis, working-class people are made to go without, while the government finds billions to fund the banks. The ruling economic system, capitalism, has exposed its inbuilt cycles of booms and busts and the government has shown its main purpose is to prop up this deeply-flawed system. If nobody stands up for the working class, we are left to suffer the most. We can not leave 'politics' to the politicians. We have to stand up for ourselves and make demands. Here are some things we should fight for:

■ **Fight every job cut.** Jobs for all could be achieved by working a shorter week with no loss of pay. Take into public control firms declaring mass redundancies. Create more jobs by expanding public services, eg. more teachers, nurses, building workers.

■ **No wage cuts.** Pay, benefits and pensions should rise with inflation or more. Tube workers need to fight for inflation-plus pay next year. Workers should calculate what inflation really is for us and fight for pay that rises automatically as prices rise. Cut taxes for the least well off; tax the rich.

■ **Decent homes for all.** No evictions; home-owners facing repossession should have the option to convert their home into rented social housing so they can stay. A big programme of council house building. Council should take over empty properties to provide quality housing at cheap rents.

■ Energy companies have been profiting, while working-class people have been unable to afford our bills. **Energy and public transport should be nationalised** and run as affordable public services.

■ **Take control of the banks.** The system of banks, pension funds and financial institutions should be made into a single, public, democratically-controlled finance service whose resources can be used to protect the jobs, pensions and homes of working-class people.

■ **Open the books.** We need to challenge our bosses' version of what is 'affordable' and crack down on tax evasion by the rich. We want access to London Underground's financial books so we can expose where

management's snouts are in the trough and challenge the figures they use to justify under-staffing and displacements.

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None of this is possible without a strong working-class fight. We need to fight to abolish the anti-union laws that prevent effective strike action. Unions can grow stronger by organising the millions of workers not yet in unions and increasing their own democracy, allowing rank-and-file workers control over their action.

A working class divided by racism, sexism, grade chauvinism and other prejudices will not be strong enough to take up the fights we need. The far right usually gains from capitalist crisis, feeding on the lie that immigrants and other minorities, not capitalism, are to blame. The labour movement needs to challenge racism and organise all workers, whether 'legal' or 'illegal' to challenge immigration laws. And it must fight for women's liberation, as pressure on household budgets, and the rise in domestic violence that often comes with economic crisis, will hit women hardest.

New Labour will deliver none of these measures. We should think of politics as our concern, confront the government and build a party that represents our interests. A workers' party should aim to form a workers' government, made up of workers, answerable to the labour movement, which serves our class as the Tories and New Labour in power have served the rich. This is the only way that the working class will see measures that meet our needs.

*Tubeworker* is produced by tubeworkers in the Alliance for Workers' Liberty, an organisation fighting as part of the labour movement for a socialist alternative to both capitalism and Stalinism, based on common ownership and democracy.

We want one democratic, fighting union for all railworkers. We reject artificial divisions between workers of different grades. We oppose racism, sexism, homophobia and all prejudice that divides us. Only our bosses benefit from a divided workforce.

## STOP THESE DISPLACEMENTS

**L**UL has finally revealed that it has over 100 CSAs 'over-establishment' and that this could double as projects finish and staff are 'no longer needed'.

The very notion that stations are 'over-staffed' is a joke. LUL does not have too many staff, it has not enough posts. The simple answer to the 'over-establishment' problem is to create proper jobs for these CSAs. There are plenty of stations where staff and passengers know that extra staff are needed, and if they weren't so fixated on saving money, management would know it too.

But no. LUL's solution is to displace them to one location per line, then use them as 'line reserves', forcing staff away from their stations, making their working lives chaotic and miserable.

There are 132 over-establishment train drivers too. If LUL gets away with using CSAs like pawns on a chess board, they will come for drivers next.

The unions are pursuing this issue in talks, but should also mobilise members to defend our workmates and tell the public and the press what is going on.

[www.workersliberty.org/staffinglevels](http://www.workersliberty.org/staffinglevels)

## SHH! ASBESTOS REMOVAL

**M**anagement arranged for the removal of asbestos from 18 points at Mornington Crescent without bothering to consult local union health & safety reps. There are strict procedures for asbestos removal, including consulting with health & safety reps, because asbestos kills.

**But the reps might insist on stringent protection for staff, which might mean the job costs a bit more, or takes a bit longer, or - shock, horror - causes disruption to the service. And we can't be having that, can we?**

[www.workersliberty.org/asbestos](http://www.workersliberty.org/asbestos)



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*Tubeworker p&p S. Matgamna*

## T5 CSAs DISAPPEAR

**M**anagement have withdrawn CSAs from Heathrow Terminal 5.

We balloted about this, and other, issues earlier this year. The unions called off the dispute for a statement from LUL that they would keep the CSAs while they did a Risk Assessment. Now the dispute is over and things have calmed down and guess what? The Risk Assessment concluded that the CSAs are not needed. When we back down, management come after us.

Management reckon that a new barrier on platform 6 has made it safe for drivers to self-dispatch - at a busy station frequented by airline passengers with stacks of luggage. And despite it being a Section 12 station, there will be just one LUL supervisor on duty. It seems to *Tubeworker* that circumstances may arise in which drivers may well find it unsafe to stop at T5.

[www.workersliberty.org/piccadilly](http://www.workersliberty.org/piccadilly)

## ONE FOR THE ROAD

**M**etronet staff's transfer back into LUL has some devil in the detail. Their work will stay with the private companies, offered to contractors. Ex-Metronet LUL staff will be left with no work, giving management a perfect excuse to make them redundant.

**Is this an elaborate plan to get rid of one of the most militant and well-organised workforces on the Underground? Metronet workers will not stand for this, and will build towards one final ballot before the 'transfer'.**

[www.workersliberty.org/metronet](http://www.workersliberty.org/metronet)

## VALUING TIME?

**L**UL is inviting (or summoning!) staff to its Valuing Time event, to explain 'the challenges we face in delivering a world class tube for a world class city' - as if we don't get enough challenges every day! Maybe they should try valuing the frontline staff who they take every opportunity to intimidate and punish for sickness.

Is it worth the rumoured cost of £6m? In its plush Bloomsbury location, the event is set up with the stage as a platform, a train pulls up and a hologram of Tim O'Toole gets out and talks to us. Strange that the company will balk at giving us a decent pay rise but doesn't mind spending millions on this corporate propaganda.

[www.workersliberty.org/tubefatcats](http://www.workersliberty.org/tubefatcats)

## THE BASIS OF OUR BONUS?

**A** Euston CSA got 0/100 for SATS. Pretty difficult, as you get points for just being there. It turns out that the people who were monitoring it were on the wrong platform!

**This is the system that determines our bonus. It's wrong in the first place that our pay depends on ticking their meaningless boxes, but this shows their system up as completely fallible.**

[www.workersliberty.org/northern](http://www.workersliberty.org/northern)

## NO THNX M8

**L**UL plans to invite customers to text comments on the service, information, and staff! This new 'Textback' idea will encourage people to send messages in the heat of the moment after minor problems which they would not bother mentioning after a short while to calm down.

*Tubeworker* wants passengers to have more say about the Underground, through elected workers' and passengers' committees which run the Underground democratically. But that's a world away from this management gimmick which will gather information with which to bash staff.

LUL planned to trial Textback at Willesden Green, but protests from local staff and the unions ensured got it put on hold and the reference to staff on the publicity withdrawn. But text tip-offs could still spell trouble for staff. Imagine a text complaining of lack of info about a train stopping in a tunnel for five minutes. Who would get it in the neck? The driver.

If and when this silly scheme comes back, we should refuse to co-operate, and our unions should do their best to get it stopped.

[www.workersliberty.org/jubilee](http://www.workersliberty.org/jubilee)

## REP VICTIMISED

**C**BS Outdoor has suspended Brendan Judge, RMT health & safety rep, in a clear act of victimisation.

The company has been making his life difficult since the successful strike in the summer, which he helped organise. First they moved him miles from his house. Then when he complained, the company trumped up charges to discipline him. Colleagues at CBS Outdoor are rallying round Brendan. The successful campaign to defend Metronet's Andy Littlechild should encourage them.

[www.workersliberty.org/cbs-outdoor](http://www.workersliberty.org/cbs-outdoor)

## TROUBLES AT STONEBRIDGE

**D**uring upcoming engineering closures on the Bakerloo, management think they can send Stonebridge Park station staff to work at Willesden Junction, which is not an LUL station!

There is now no Station Supervisor at Stonebridge, so LUL expects CSAs to book themselves on remotely by phoning another station! They are supposed to deal with lost property even though that is a Supervisor's job and there is nowhere to store it securely.

LUL have also moved ticket office staff's start times to earlier in the morning so that they can detrain the first trains alone! Sorry, but wasn't the outcome of the long dispute about lone working detrainment that no-one was supposed to do it any more?

[www.workersliberty.org/bakerloo](http://www.workersliberty.org/bakerloo)

**Tubeworker's weblog  
- daily updates -**

[www.workersliberty.org/twblog](http://www.workersliberty.org/twblog)