



# Edinburgh TUC Anti Cuts Newsletter March 2013

## BEDROOM TAX IS APPALLING SAY DOCTORS

The British Academy of Childhood Disability (BACD), which represents the UK's foremost child disability experts have condemned the so called bedroom tax. From April 2013 660,000 social housing tenants in the UK face a reduction in their housing benefit because they are deemed to be under occupying their homes.

According to the ConDems own figures 420,000 of those affected have some form of disability. There is no exemption for families caring for children with severe disabilities. A Consultant Paediatrician has said that the bedroom tax would penalise disabled children.

He said: "To impose this tax, this so called tax on families because they have a disabled child is astounding and it's appalling. It sounds ludicrous because a lot of these disabled children have had bedrooms specially adapted or in many cases specially built for their needs.

**If the parents can't afford to pay for this so called bedroom tax, they have to move to a smaller house, they lose their specially adapted bedroom and then they have to sleep with their brother or sister.**

**Mr Gibbs said he was also concerned about the impact on the brothers or sisters of disabled children if they were forced to share a bedroom.**

**"The effect on the other brother or sister would be a totally disruptive night, sleep deprivation and could have a psychological impact as well," he said. Children with significant disabilities have many medical problems and particularly at night, many have mobility problems, many have epilepsy and seizures can be particularly troublesome at night."**

**"For all these medical reasons disabled children often have discomfort during the night and they need much care and attention from their parents and that would be highly disruptive for any brother or sister that had to share the bedroom with them."**



## SUPPORT THE ANTI BEDROOM TAX AND ANTI EVICTIONS PETITION

A coalition of community groups and trade unions have launched a petition directed at the City Council's Petitions Committee. The petition can be signed online at: [http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/directory\\_record/2211494/bedroom\\_tax](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/directory_record/2211494/bedroom_tax). People signing have to be on the Edinburgh voter's role.

The petition closes on 5th April. After that on line signatures and hard copy signatures are counted. Then the petition will be presented to the Council's Petitions Committee meeting on the 18th April. The petition calls on the Council to renounce its eviction policy if rent arrears are due to people suffering cuts in a range of benefits not just housing benefit.

On the 16th April a Council Committee will consider a report from officials on Council policy regarding the bedroom tax. Edinburgh TUC will be having a

close look at this Report when it is made available to the public a week before. If we do not think the Report is satisfactory then we will apply for permission to have a deputation to the Committee. We will be asking local trade unions to support the deputation by sending messages of support to Councillors. Apart from the eviction issue we will be asking the Council to help Edinburgh citizens who are about to be impoverished by benefit cuts.



## Prominent Economist Condemns Cameron

Paul Krugman, a winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics, has just published a new book entitled 'End this Depression NOW!'. The book is dedicated 'To the unemployed, who deserve better'.

In the book Krugman describes how the policies of Cameron, a champion of austerity, have not worked. Cameron bangs on about the UK economy being broken and austerity being the only way to fix it. Well, according to Krugman, David Cameron and his fellow millionaire George Osborne are wrong. The UK economy is deeply depressed and is entering into a new recession. It is not that austerity has failed to deal with depression but that it actually makes it worse. The ConDems want to continue with austerity for years which is a good illustration of the profound irrationality of their politics.

We sincerely hope that the fears of Tory MPs are justified - they are facing a disaster at the next General Election - which cannot come too soon.



## THE EDINBURGH ANTI CUTS ALLIANCE

Edinburgh Trade Union Council invites you to support the Alliance. You can show your support in various ways:

**\* Join our email network to receive newsletters and hear about campaign activities and events. Email: [info-etuc@btconnect.com](mailto:info-etuc@btconnect.com)**

## Castlebeck Goes Into Administration

Castlebeck, the learning disability residential care provider that operated the Winterbourne View hospital where an abuse scandal was uncovered in 2011, has gone into administration. Castlebeck runs a home in Dundee which had complaints made about it earlier in the year.

No tears will shed for the private sector cowboys and banks who created Castlebeck but there are worries about how current residents will be treated by the Government. The government's position is clear that people with a learning disability should not be living in places like Winterbourne View. However, many people think that they will not be properly supported by the Tories either directly or because local authorities are facing Draconian cuts. Castlebeck is not the only problem in the care home sector.

The Care Quality Commission has just reported that care homes were not preventing, detecting or properly treating problems such as dehydration, pneumonia, malnutrition and urinary infections in people with dementia in care homes in 78 out of 151 primary care trust areas of England (52%). Care home staff there are also missing bed sores, lower respiratory tract infections and broken bones in residents with serious memory loss, CQC inspectors found.

Meanwhile we are still waiting, eighteen months later, for the Police Report on the two deaths at the Elsie Inglis Home in Edinburgh.

 Conservatives

## WAR ON THE POOR

