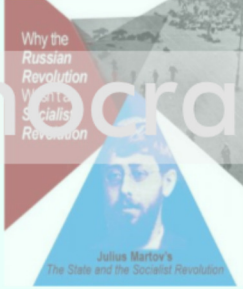


# Democracy



## The Socialist Party of Great Britain Members' Handbook

# Equality



# Co-operation



## The Socialist Party's Object and Declaration of Principles

This declaration is the basis of our organisation and, because it is also an important historical document dating from the formation of the party in 1904, its original language has been retained.

### Object

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### Declaration of Principles

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:

1. That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e. land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organize consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. The Socialist Party of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

# **The Socialist Party of Great Britain Members' Handbook**

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The Socialist Party of Great Britain is part of the World Socialist Movement (see [www.worldsocialism.org/wsm/home](http://www.worldsocialism.org/wsm/home)). The WSM website includes articles about socialism in many languages: [www.worldsocialism.org/wsm/langues-lenguas](http://www.worldsocialism.org/wsm/langues-lenguas).

The WSM also includes our companion parties:

Socialist Party of Canada: [www.worldsocialism.org/canada](http://www.worldsocialism.org/canada)

World Socialist Party (US): [www.wspus.org](http://www.wspus.org)

World Socialist Party of New Zealand: [www.worldsocialism.org/nz](http://www.worldsocialism.org/nz)

World Socialist Party (India)

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# The Socialist Party of Great Britain

# SPGB

## Introduction

The Socialist Party is like no other political party in Britain. It is made up of people who have joined together because we want to get rid of the capitalist system and establish a worldwide socialist society. Our only aim is to build a movement of socialists for socialism, and we don't accept that reforms can lead towards socialism or substantially improve capitalism. We aim to encourage others to share our views and act for themselves, organising democratically and co-operatively, to bring about the kind of society that we advocate.

We publish literature, we hold meetings and debates throughout the country, and we state our case wherever possible in the media. We organise weekend conferences, we contest elections, and we discuss our ideas with people wherever we can. Our views on how capitalism operates have been proved right time after time, and we offer a revolutionary alternative which can be run in the interests of everyone.

Getting involved in party activity not only helps build the socialist movement, it can also be interesting and rewarding for ourselves. As well as meeting others and sharing our

ideas and views, it's a good opportunity to develop skills and knowledge we might not be able to make use of elsewhere in our lives. Many of us feel disempowered or alienated in our jobs, and contributing to the party can be a more fulfilling antidote. Because the Socialist Party is based on co-operation, everyone has an equal say and equal opportunities to participate, which can be a refreshing change from being in organisations with hierarchies. This handbook explains the work which the Socialist Party does to promote socialism, how the party is run, and how you can join in.



# About The SPGB

The Socialist Party of Great Britain was founded in 1904, following a split from the Social Democratic Federation, Britain's earliest political party in the socialist tradition. The SPGB's founder members were disillusioned with the SDF's reformist stance and authoritarian leadership, and this commitment to revolution without leaders has remained ever since. The SPGB comes from the 'Impossible' strand of Marxism, which stresses the limited value of political, economic and social reforms in capitalism. Impossibleism holds that reforms are irrelevant or counter-productive to the goal of achieving real emancipation through establishing a socialist society.



*Attendees at the SPGB's 1905 Conference*

Over the decades, the Socialist Party has provided a clear, thorough analysis of world events, based on an understanding of society's economic and class basis. We have consistently opposed every war, highlighted how the systems in the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, Venezuela, North Korea and elsewhere have just been variants of capitalism, and called for equality between the sexes and between people of all ethnicities.

While the party's principles have stayed unchanged, we have shaped our methods and perspective over the years, with all important decisions made by majority votes from the whole membership. We have always aimed to be as democratic and open as possible, believing that everyone should have an equal say and equal opportunities to participate.

And we believe that by working together, society can be transformed to benefit everyone. We are aiming for a democratic revolution to establish a classless, stateless society based on directly satisfying people's self-determined needs and wants. Services, industries and agriculture would be owned and managed in common, with free access to what they produce and provide being available to anyone. And since capitalism is a global system of society, it must be replaced globally, and by the vast majority of people.

The Socialist Party has a long history, but our views and aims are more important now than ever. Our stance gives both an explanation of and a solution to today's problems, such as threats to the environment, poverty and divisions between people. The more we can spread our ideas, the more we build the socialist movement.





# How The Party Is Run

The Socialist Party's goal is to build a movement to democratically replace capitalism with socialism. In the meantime, our role is not just to spread socialist ideas, but also to put some of these into practice, as far as we can. The party is organised according to principles which we would like to see expanded upon and developed in a socialist society: principles such as equal, democratic and leaderless decision-making, co-operation, voluntary work, and avoiding prejudice and discrimination. How these principles translate into the party's structure is described in the rule book (which can be read at [www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/party-rules](http://www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/party-rules)) and Standing Orders, which have been democratically agreed on and amended by members over the years.

## Branches

Branches are the main way that the party is organised, and are important for socialists to keep in contact with each other. The more members who contribute to their branch, the more views and experiences can be drawn on to further the party's work. All members are on an equal footing, reflected in the democratic way that branches and their meetings are run. Branches are made up of at least six members living in the same area. If a member doesn't live near a branch,

they will be in Central branch, which also includes members living overseas, particularly in countries without a companion party. Branches have a Secretary (to organise meetings, including the agenda and minutes) and a Treasurer (to maintain the branch bank account), and may also appoint other roles such as a Literature or Campaigns Secretary.

Branches run business meetings which discuss activity, nominate members for election or appointment to party posts and committees, and discuss and propose items for the two party-wide meetings held each year, Conference and the Autumn Delegate Meeting. So, branches are

## Buddy System

New members can be put in contact with a 'buddy', who they can ask if they have any questions about party principles, theory and practices. The party always aims for its views to be accessible and its procedures to be transparent, but anyone who wants support with learning more about the party and how it runs can contact their branch Secretary. Branch Secretaries and members who would like to volunteer to be a 'buddy' should liaise with the General Secretary or Executive Committee.

of vital importance in how the party runs. Without decisions made by branches, members can't get nominated for particular roles and changes to rules or procedures can't be proposed. A branch's business meetings can be held in person or online (by email or through audio or video conferencing), as often as works best for members. Business meetings run to this format:

- The Secretary prepares and distributes the meeting's agenda beforehand, and any member can suggest items to discuss.
- A Chair is nominated and agreed, and they make sure that the meeting runs smoothly.
- Minutes from the last meeting are reviewed and agreed as accurate after any corrections, if needed.
- Minutes of the party's Executive Committee's latest meeting and any other party news can be reviewed, so that members are kept informed of what else is going on. The branch may agree to liaise with the EC or any other branches or committees about any activity.
- Decisions are made by a member proposing a motion, and then someone else seconding it (agreeing that it should be raised). Whoever moved and seconded the motion can speak about it, and all are able to discuss the issue, including any suggested amendments. Then all branch members vote for or against the motion, or abstain, with it being

agreed if a majority vote in favour.

- Many decisions are made more informally than this, perhaps just through some discussion and a consensus agreement.
- Decisions are only binding if the meeting has a quorum of members attending, normally a minimum of three.
- During the meeting, minutes are taken (usually by the Secretary), distributed after they are written up, and should also be published on the party's website forum or message board Spintcom. Names of who voted which way aren't included in minutes unless any member calls for a 'division', which can be done on important matters of principle.
- All meetings are free to anyone to attend, whether or not a party member. We believe that democracy works best when it's open and transparent.
- At face-to-face meetings, party literature should be available, with takings from sales and a collection for branch funds logged by the treasurer.

At the start of the year, each branch completes its financial and membership report (Form C) and sends a proportion of its income to central funds. A Form F is filled in by the branch Secretary whenever a member leaves the party. Full guidelines about how branches are run can be found in the Branch Standing Orders, which is available at <https://groups.io/g/spintcom/files/>

[Standing%20Orders%20Committee](#) or through the Central Organiser. Dealing with admin and going through party business shouldn't take up too much of a branch meeting, so that members have plenty of time to talk about anything of interest and share ideas.

Branches also organise activities,



which can include talks, reading groups or debates with other political organisations. Street stalls, leaflet drops and attending events run by other group can also be effective ways to engage with people and distribute literature. Leaflets and other publicity materials can be downloaded from Spintcom here <https://groups.io/g/spintcom/files>, but check that they are compliant with the Electoral Commission's rules on 'imprints' before using: [electoralcommission.org.uk/imprints](http://electoralcommission.org.uk/imprints). We should keep ourselves informed

## Summer School

Summer School is the party's annual weekend of talks and discussion, and has been held in the Midlands for several decades. The weekend's talks are all on a theme (recently, these have included Work, The Class Divide and Technology), and the event also includes an exclusive publication, exhibition and bookstall. The weekend always has a relaxed, friendly atmosphere, and is a great opportunity to meet and chat with others.



of issues affecting our local areas which we can present our case as an answer to. Branches are also encouraged to arrange social events or walks, art workshops, practical projects or visits to places of interest.

Our meetings and events are listed on the party's website [www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/events](http://www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/events). Guidance on organising activity can be provided by the Executive Committee or the Central Organiser and funding may be available for purchasing tables, banners and other materials. Branches are still encouraged to maximise their own incomes, through donations, literature sales and other fundraising initiatives.

## Executive Committee And Party Officers

The party has a ten-member Executive Committee and Party Officers (General Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Central Organiser, two Auditors and two Trustees). Candidates volunteer and are



nominated by branches, and then elected annually by the whole membership for the following year. There's nothing to prevent someone being nominated and voted in to a post for successive years.

The Executive Committee meets online on the first Saturday of each month to discuss committees' work, authorise large payments, approve new literature and deal with any issues in how the party is running. Its meetings (like all party meetings) are open to all members and non-members. The EC has no powers to make rules or put items on the Conference or Autumn Delegate Meeting agendas and is accountable to the party as a whole. More information about how the EC runs can be found in its Standing Orders (<https://groups.io/g/spintcom/files/EC%20Standing%20Orders>).

## Head Office

The party's Head Office is at 52 Clapham High Street, London SW4 7UN, a few minutes' walk from Clapham North Tube station and on bus routes serving Clapham High Street. The building includes a meeting hall, offices, a library (from which members can borrow books) and archives, with a kitchen and shower facilities. Head Office is not open full time, so anyone wanting to visit outside meeting times should call 020 7622 3811 or email [spgb@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb@worldsocialism.org).

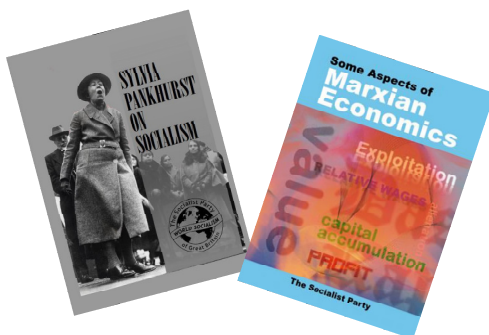
## Committees

The party also has committees responsible for particular work. These are sub-committees of the EC who appoint their members from those agreeing to be nominated by branches (using a Form B).

Nominations are usually made near the end of each year, and those appointed are in post for the next calendar year, as with other roles. Members joining a committee can always receive support from others so they know what to do, and roles are explained in their Terms of Reference (<https://groups.io/g/spintcom/files/Depts%20and%20Committees%20-%20ToR>). New ideas about how committees can run and what they can do are always welcome, as what's worked in the past won't always be what works best for the future. Temporary ('ad hoc') committees can also be set up to work on particular tasks, as with recent ad hoc committees on increasing the number of women members and looking into party

regional restructuring. Committees can also 'co-opt' other members volunteering to help out. An EC member liaises with each committee to make sure that everyone is aware of how work is progressing. And committees produce reports (using a Form H or I) discussed at Conference and Autumn Delegate Meetings, so that all members are kept informed and can make suggestions. Outside these times, ideas about a committee's work can be made directly to the committee, through branches or to the EC.

Committees are grouped together into departments according to their role. Below is a list of committees and officer posts, what they do and their contact details.



## Products Department

This department's aim is to raise socialist awareness among the wider community through printed, online, audio and visual media.

- **Publications Committee:** produces pamphlets and leaflets. [spgb.publications@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.publications@worldsocialism.org)
- **Blog Committee:** maintains the *Socialism Or Your Money Back*, *Socialist Courier* and *Africa's Socialist Banner* blogs. [spgb.blog@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.blog@worldsocialism.org)
- **Socialist Standard Production Committee:** produces and distributes the *Socialist Standard*. [spgb.sspc.ed@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.sspc.ed@worldsocialism.org)
- **Audio / Visual Committee:** produces films and audio recordings about the party case, including recordings of talks. [spgb@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb@worldsocialism.org)



## Outreach Department

This department's aim is to promote socialism and the party.

- **Campaigns and Media Committee:** organises campaigns, including Summer School. It also issues press releases to and liaises with the media. [spgb.campaigns@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.campaigns@worldsocialism.org)
- **Election Committee:** plans and organises the party's involvement in elections. [spgb.election@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.election@worldsocialism.org)
- **Advertising And Enquiries Committee:** publicises the party, its activities and literature through adverts in the media and leaflets, and deals with subsequent enquiries. [spgb.ads@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.ads@worldsocialism.org)

## Membership Services Committees

- **Membership Applications Committee:** processes applications for membership which come in centrally (rather than through branches). [spgb.membership@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.membership@worldsocialism.org)
- **Education Committee:** maintains a range of educational materials about party theory. [spgb@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb@worldsocialism.org)

## Internet, Housekeeping and Maintenance Committees

- **Internet Committee:** maintains the party's website. [spgb.internet@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.internet@worldsocialism.org)
- **Investment Committee:** manages the investment of party funds. [spgb.investment@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.investment@worldsocialism.org)
- **Premises Committee:** responsible for arranging the maintenance of Head Office. [spgb@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb@worldsocialism.org)
- **Library And Archives Committee:** looks after the Head Office library and historical records of the party. [spgb.library@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.library@worldsocialism.org)
- **Standing Orders Committee:** directs the arrangements for Conference and ADM, including their agendas. [spgb.soc@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.soc@worldsocialism.org)
- **Ballot Committee:** organises party ballots for Conference and committee members. [spgb.ballot@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.ballot@worldsocialism.org)
- **Head Office Organiser:** deals with post, distributing literature and the general running of Head Office. [spgb@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb@worldsocialism.org)

## Officer Posts

- **General Secretary:** writes the minutes for Conference, ADM and EC meetings and organises some admin. [spgb.gensec@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.gensec@worldsocialism.org)
- **Assistant Secretary:** supports the General Secretary, especially with arrangements for EC meetings. [spgb.asstsec@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.asstsec@worldsocialism.org)
- **Central Organiser:** co-ordinates branch activity. [spgb.co@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.co@worldsocialism.org)
- **Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer:** manage the party's accounts, including arranging payments. [spgb.treasurer@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.treasurer@worldsocialism.org), [spgb.assttreas@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.assttreas@worldsocialism.org)
- **Auditors:** audit the party's accounts. [spgb.auditors@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.auditors@worldsocialism.org)
- **Trustees:** responsible for ensuring that the party's premises and property are maintained in line with legislation. [spgb.trustees@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.trustees@worldsocialism.org)

## Conference And Voting

The guidelines (Standing Orders) and rules which underpin how the party is organised have been democratically decided by its members, evolving over the decades. Any changes to these, or to party policy generally, is decided through discussions at the annual Conference and subsequent voting on motions. Conference is held over a weekend every Spring, with members attending at Head Office or online. At least 17 weeks beforehand, branches are asked for motions and items of discussion to clarify or change policy or practices. Committees and Officers also prepare reports on their work. These will then appear on a preliminary agenda sent out at least 11 weeks before Conference. This gives branches the opportunity to put forward amendments to motions proposed by other branches. At least five weeks before Conference, the



final agenda is sent out, giving branches and members time to think about and discuss their opinions. Branches can send at least two delegates to Conference, and during the meeting they should make any points the majority of branch members want raised, while also being able to give their own personal views. Any member (whether or not a delegate) can attend and speak as well, as can non-members. Floor resolutions can be raised and then voted on during Conference for issues where a quick decision is needed, though these are recommendations rather than



# Autumn Delegate Meeting

Over a weekend each October, the party holds an Autumn Delegate Meeting. Its agenda includes reports from committees and officers (sent to the EC in August) about their plans for future activity, as well as items for discussion from branches about party theory, policy and practice.

binding. Within five weeks after Conference, branches should hold a meeting to discuss the motions to be voted on. Members then vote according to their own views using ballot papers sent out from Head Office. Motions that are carried become resolutions, either as the party's policy or as instructions to the Executive Committee. This is the main way for the party to make significant decisions.

There is also provision for a Party Poll, as a referendum of the whole membership, which can be called by Conference, ADM, the EC or at least four branches, normally on some question of principle. If a majority of members decide a change, no member or committee can override that, although members are always at liberty to argue against majority decisions and propose alternatives.

Each branch can send up to two delegates, and non-delegates can also attend and speak (as can non-members). Floor resolutions can be made at ADM, but the meeting does not have the same ability to make decisions as the votes following Conference. Floor resolutions at ADM have the status of recommendations which the EC does not necessarily have to follow. However, if the EC decides not to, it must explain why.

For those who attend at Head Office, Conference and ADM are good opportunities to meet and socialise with other members. The meetings includes a lengthy lunch break, and members often go for a meal or a drink in the evenings. Those who have difficulty affording to travel to and from Conference and ADM can apply to have these costs funded by the party by contacting the Treasurer.



## Voluntary Contributions

The party's main expenditure comes through running Head Office, printing literature, subsidising party events and taking part in elections. The costs of maintaining ourselves significantly exceeds our everyday income. So, members are asked to make a voluntary financial contribution to the party, payable in cash at branch meetings or by cheque or standing order to the branch or to Head Office. The recommended amount is £5 a month (£60 a year) but members can pay more or less than this amount depending on what they feel they can afford. Members of Central branch can get details of how to set up a standing order by emailing [spgb.treasurer@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.treasurer@worldsocialism.org). A voluntary contribution can also take the form of participating in the party's activities.

## Being An Effective Socialist

Our principles of equality, democracy and co-operation are central to how the Socialist Party operates. They should also guide how we relate to each other. Working well together is crucial to how the party runs. We're all working for the same aims, and each of us has different skills and ideas we can use together to help grow the socialist movement. All party members have equal opportunities to contribute and have their say, which makes a refreshing change from the hierarchies and limitations we have to put up with elsewhere in our lives.

The party has always welcomed open, honest discussion, and members are encouraged to question and discuss the party's views, organisation and procedures. That way, our position can remain relevant and important in wider



society, and the party can remain democratic and transparent. Discussion at meetings is directed through an elected Chair, to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to speak and that the conversation keeps on track. The Chair can censure contributions which are abusive or otherwise out of order. But all members should take responsibility to remain civil and respectful, to ensure that our discussions are interesting, accessible and productive. This applies not only to discussions between members, but also with anyone we are engaging with, whether online or in person. We can best make the argument for a more humane society if we act in a decent, amiable way ourselves.

As all party work is voluntary, it is carried out in whatever spare time members have. It's recognised that we each have lives outside the party, and other commitments which impact on our time available for party activity. In our working lives, there is no conflict between being a party member and joining a trade union or similar organisation. However, many unions fund the Labour Party, and members can opt out of paying this as part of their union subscription. Unions aim to improve workers' conditions within capitalism, but are not political organisations. Nor are tenants' associations, parents' associations and the like.

Being involved with some other organisations, though, is not compatible with being a member of

the SPGB. Party members cannot belong to any other political party, nor assist them by voting for them or writing or speaking for them (except when challenging their views in a shared debate, for example). If a member supports another political party, or otherwise acts in a way which goes against our object and principles then any branch could raise this with the Executive Committee. The EC would then ensure that the member in question has the opportunity to explain their views on the issue, and that all relevant information is gathered. The outcome would depend on the circumstances, but in the rare situation that the member may be expelled from the party as a consequence of their actions, this can only be decided through a vote of the entire membership.

Unlike other political organisations, the party doesn't have a leadership, and so our policies and culture are shaped by the membership as a whole. The framework we have is really there to support our main work, which is to promote socialism.

At meetings, and in some correspondence, members are often referred to as 'comrades', either collectively or individually, e.g. 'Comrade Smith'. Using the term 'comrade' refers to having a shared perspective and acknowledges our equal opportunities to participate. Of course, members' full names are also used.

# Party Activity

As well as through public meetings, the party spreads socialist ideas chiefly through its online presence, publishing literature and audio / visual materials, and by contesting elections.

The party's journal the **Socialist Standard** has been produced monthly since 1904. It includes lively articles giving socialist views on current events, reviews and party news. Subscriptions can be set up at [www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/subscriptions](http://www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/subscriptions)

The party's **website** [spgb.net](http://spgb.net) has many pages about party theory, including back issues of the *Socialist Standard*, videos and recordings of talks.

The party has produced many **pamphlets** discussing aspects of our case. They can be read online at [www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/pamphlet](http://www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/pamphlet) and hard copies can be bought from Head Office, at meetings, or online at [www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/store](http://www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/store).



**Spintcom** is the party's message board for discussion of internal matters. Only party members can post here, while anyone can view messages. The forum can be found at <https://groups.io/g/spintcom/topics> and to sign up, go here: <https://groups.io/g/spintcom/join>. Spintcom also has a files section for party meeting minutes, rules and terms of reference for committees: <https://groups.io/g/spintcom/files>

**Spopen** is for discussion of any matters of interest to members of the World Socialist Movement. Only members of the WSM can join, while anyone can view posts. Spopen can be found at <https://groups.io/g/spopen/topics>

The party website includes a **forum** at [www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/forum](http://www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/forum) which has areas to discuss party activity and any social, political and economic issues of interest. To join the forum, go to [www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/join-the-forum](http://www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/join-the-forum) and guidance about participating can be found at [www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/forum-rules-and-guidelines](http://www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/forum-rules-and-guidelines).

The party has several **social media** accounts and **blogs**.

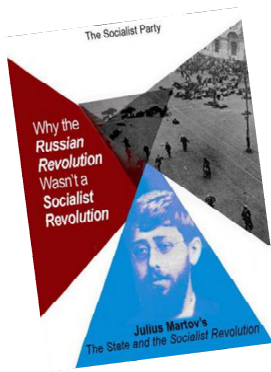
The Blog Committee also compiles **Grist**, a regular digest of news items relevant to members. To receive copies, email [spgb.blog@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb.blog@worldsocialism.org).

# Elections

The party also contests elections: local, regional, national, and previously to the European Parliament. The main aim of this is as a platform for publicity, while also utilising what democratic practices exist in capitalism. The party's views on using parliament are discussed in more detail in the pamphlet *What's Wrong With Using Parliament?* [www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/pamphlet/whats-wrong-with-using-parliament](http://www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/pamphlet/whats-wrong-with-using-parliament)

Standing as a candidate involves attending hustings meetings, where candidates of all parties give a short opening address and then take questions from the audience. Candidates may also distribute literature door-to-door or at street stalls, and take part in TV, radio or text interviews. Members standing as candidates first need to pass the 'speakers' test'. This involves answering the kind of questions which are likely to be asked during an election hustings, to check that our principles can be explained clearly and briefly. Members can also help out with publicity at election times, or by being a candidate's agent, who helps make arrangements.





# Getting Involved

The party needs active members to function, and anyone with available time, enthusiasm and new ideas is always welcome to contribute. Guidance and support are available from committees and officers, who will be happy to answer any questions about how the party runs. There are many ways you can get more involved:

- If you are interested in **writing**, you could submit an article to the *Socialist Standard* or one of the party's blogs; or a longer, more in-depth study could be submitted as a pamphlet to the Publications Committee. A large project may benefit from members working together to bounce off each others' ideas and share out what is to be researched and written up. This could be as part of the Education Committee, whose remit is to prepare materials about socialist theory, to provide members and anyone else with detailed and clear analysis. Or, for something much shorter, you could write letters to newspapers or other journals relating the socialist case to whatever is in the news.
- If you have skills in **design**, you could contribute to the *Socialist Standard*, or help produce leaflets, adverts, posters, t-shirts or other products.
- If you have experience in producing **audio / visual** materials, then you could make podcasts, animations, videos of party talks or remaster archive recordings.
- If you have **practical skills** (and live within reach of London), you could help with the maintenance of Head Office. As well as decorating, repair work or cleaning at Head Office, members can help with arranging mailshots and engaging with visitors. Volunteers are also needed to prepare lunch at Conference and ADM. Contact the Head Office Organiser or Premises Committee if you can help.
- If you have **admin skills**, then ask to be nominated for the Executive Committee, Ballot Committee, Standing Orders Committee, General Secretary, Assistant Secretary or Central Organiser posts, Or consider putting yourself forward to be your own branch's Secretary.
- If you have experience in **accountancy**, ask to be put forward to be your branch Treasurer, or for the party's Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer or Auditor posts.
- If you are active **online**, take part in discussions on the forums and social media. As well as Socialist Party accounts, you could contribute to forums run by other political organisations or sites like Quora. Post links to party



**OUR WORLD OR NO WORLD!**  
**SYSTEM CHANGE. NOT CLIMATE CHANGE**



**A DAY OF TALKS  
ON THE  
ENVIRONMENT  
AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

PRESENTED BY NORTH  
LONDON BRANCH OF  
THE SOCIALIST PARTY

**VENUE**  
MAYDAY ROOMS  
88 FLEET STREET  
LONDON EC4Y 1DH

**DATE - TIME**  
SAT 9 NOVEMBER 2019  
11.15AM - 4.45PM

11.20\* **BILL MARTIN**  
'Flat Earthers against global  
warming: here, what and  
why. To debate climate  
change!'

12.25 **PADDY SHANNON**  
'Green, Recycle, Re-walk:  
why halocarbon is not a class  
act!'

14.30 **STEPHEN HARRER**  
'Hot Planet, Cool Media:  
Environmental Discourse in  
the Digital Age'

15.35 **GLENN MORRIS**  
'A Utopian Vision!'

\*Times approximately

• **FREE ENTRY** • **ALL WELCOME**  
W: [spgb.net](http://spgb.net) E: [spgb@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb@worldsocialism.org)

material on social media such as Facebook and Twitter, or repost or share party posts.

- If you have experience in **web** design or programming, contact the Internet Committee.
- If you wish to stand as a candidate in an **election**, contact the Election Committee.
- Branches should liaise with local **student** unions or colleges and universities to arrange talks or discussions about issues most relevant to students.
- If you want to help with **publicity**, contact your branch or the Campaigns and Media Committee about distributing leaflets, setting up a street stall or widening distribution of the *Socialist Standard*, such as in newsagents. Or you could produce adverts for publications or online by

contacting the Advertising and Enquiries Committee.

- If you are interested in **public speaking**, contact your branch or the Campaigns and Media Committee about organising a talk or the Audio Visual Committee about producing a podcast. Or you could put our views across at Speakers' Corner in London or at other organisations' meetings.
- If you are interested in arranging **events**, then there are many options as well as talks and debates with other groups. Street stalls are a good way to engage with the public and sell literature; discussion groups or book groups can spark off debate on a particular theme. More sociable activities could include walks, visits to museums or places of historical interest. Members could form art groups to design posters, bags, t-shirts or badges, for example. Party forums or social media could be used to find others with shared interests.
- If you have any other specific **skills**, then contact whichever committee or officer might be best to help you get involved.
- If you have any new **ideas** of ways the party can improve how it runs or how it presents its ideas, raise them at a branch meeting and contact the relevant committee.



The Socialist Party has a vital role in building a movement towards a new society based on equality and freedom. And we all have a vital part to play in this campaign. Along the way, we can meet new people, learn more and develop our skills. What can you do to get involved?



The Socialist Party provides us with both an understanding of how capitalism operates and an exciting, revolutionary alternative which can work in everyone's interests. This handbook explains how the party works to build a movement for real change. It describes the party's democratic, leaderless structure, the way branches are run, how decisions are made and the different committees and roles members have. It also outlines the many ways which the party promotes socialism, and how you can get involved.