

WORKFARE ISN'T FARE

Homebase in Haringey, (part of the Home Retail Group which also includes Argos) is now using the Government's workfare scheme – in which unemployed people are forced to work for no pay and few workplace rights – to increase Homebase's profits. This Homebase store recently took on 21 of these unpaid workers.

It is unacceptable that paid jobs are being replaced with unpaid labour. People should be paid a living wage for the job they are asked to do. Poverty levels are already very high in most of Haringey. Being forced to work for no pay just makes things worse. Why should people be forced to work for no pay?



The government has handed millions to private companies to administer these Workfare schemes, supposedly to save money by helping people to find jobs.

But the reality is:

- Workfare does NOT get people into jobs. A recent government report found that just 3.5% of people on Workfare actually find paid employment lasting more than 6 months (and many of those would have found work anyway). The government then handed yet more money to scheme providers, which shows that Workfare is about driving down wages and subsidising the private sector.
- Workfare can make it harder to find work. The government's own research on workfare found that "there is little evidence that workfare increases the likelihood of finding work. It can even reduce employment chances by limiting the time available for job search and by failing to provide the skills and experience valued by employers."

- Workfare affects ALL of us. Workfare placements replace REAL vacancies, taking away genuine paid jobs, so forcing more people to rely on benefits.

Under workfare schemes unemployed people have to work for nothing or they face sanctions meaning loss of ALL benefits! There is a growing movement of opposition to the Workfare scheme, and in response a number of companies have quit the programme.

The Daily Telegraph reported in January 2013 that the Home Retail Group expect profit this year will be £10m ahead of current market expectations of £73m. Last year the boss of Home Retail Group was paid £1.1 million. This money is earned by exploiting people who can't find jobs and are made to work for free. Only Homebase's bosses benefit from this.

**WORKFARE WON'T HELP
THE UNEMPLOYED**
Even though the government claim that these schemes are about helping people into work, their own research states that:
"there is little evidence that workfare increases the likelihood of finding work. It can even reduce employment chances by limiting the time available for job search and by failing to provide the skills and experience valued by employers."

What you can do:

- Boycott Homebase until they agree to pay staff properly
- Speak to the manager of this branch and say you don't agree with them using unpaid labour
- Contact Homebase HQ on 0845 603 6677 or 01908 692 301 or info@homebase.co.uk
- You could also say you will be boycotting Argos until unpaid claimants are replaced by properly paid staff.

For more about the campaign against Workfare check out the Boycott Workfare website at: <http://www.boycottworkfare.org/>

To contact us at Haringey Solidarity Group

PO Box 2474, London, N8; www.haringey.org.uk; phone 0845 223 5270; find us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter: @__hsg__