

# TOGETHER

## Together Norwich Launch

On 24<sup>th</sup> January, just over 40 people representing a range of different local organisations came together to launch the Together Norwich Organising Committee.

The meeting was addressed by Sarah Woolley (General Secretary of the Bakers Food and Allied Workers' Union), Clive Lewis MP, Ben Margolis (Norwich City of Sanctuary) and Gawain Little (Vice Chair of Together), after which those assembled split into workshop groups to discuss mobilisation for the national demonstration in 28<sup>th</sup> March and local community organising against the far right. These groups then reported back to the full meeting.

The following principles were agreed:

- Together Norwich will work as a local alliance, in line with the principles of Together ([togetheralliance.org.uk](http://togetheralliance.org.uk)), to mobilise anti-racists and anti-fascists and to organise in the community against the rise of the far right.
- Together Norwich will be open to all those organisations which support the national statement and strategy of Together.
- Together Norwich recognises the long-standing work done by a range of organisations locally on issues of migration and anti-racism and seeks to co-ordinate with them, respecting the work they have done and the role they play.
- Co-ordination of Together Norwich will be by bringing together representatives of all those organisations involved as a local organising committee.
- Together Norwich will not develop a separate membership list but will publicise its activities via all participating organisations and to a list of supporters.

In addition, the following practical points were made in discussion.

#### Mobilising for 28<sup>th</sup> March:

- We must all take the message of Together back to our groups, encouraging members to sign the statement and sign up for the coaches for the demonstration.
- We should work in a cross-party way and aim to speak at as many political party meetings as possible about Together.
- We will need people to co-ordinate logistics for local leafleting, posters, etc.
- Coaches have been booked for the demonstration, but more financial support will be needed to ensure that everyone who wants to attend can.
- We should look to have stalls at community events.
- Stickers can be useful in raising awareness of the demonstration.
- The local Stand Up to Racism WhatsApp group have over 200 people on it and can be used to build support for the demonstration.
- There is an Eventbrite link for the Norwich coaches for the demonstration and everyone is urged to book early and spread the work - <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/coach-to-together-alliance-national-demonstration-tickets-1980624463086>
- Our local literature should include a focus on the economic issues which are driving people towards the far right.
- We are marching for our local communities, not just against the far right.

#### Community Organising:

- This is the most important aspect of our work, especially around key flash points such as Bowthorpe.
- We need to connect with people outside of activist circles.
- To do this, we need to ensure that our messaging is correct.
- The far right dominate the narrative – our job is to take it back.
- There is a difference between trying to reach directly into communities, e.g. by knocking doors, and using spider webs of contacts to reach out – the former can be quicker and can be done well but the latter often makes a deeper connection.
- We should approach Acorn locally to discuss direct approaches via door knocking, and see if some alliance can be built.
- At the same time, our primary approach should be to identify all of the connections we have personally and to approach these with our message, progressively reaching out further and further into the local community via schools, churches, sports teams, social clubs, community centres, etc.
- We should seek to have a presence at Latitude Festival.

- We need to be clear about the focus on different groups – the far right, the ‘Reform-curious’, soft anti-racists – and approach each group differently.
- The holiday hunger project provides an example of the kind of community work we could develop.
- Schools are hubs of their community, and we should try to deepen our links with local schools as well as reaching out through parent networks and PTAs.
- With votes at 16, colleges become more important too.
- As well as direct conversations, we need potential conversation starters, such as leaflets, beer mats, etc.
- In the past, campaigns have been organised via the busses by getting on and speaking to passengers.
- Libraries
- Sports clubs/centres
- Trade unions
- Universities/colleges
- Faith groups
- Cafes, book shops, social spaces
- However, personal connections are key – our message is always the same: can we send a speaker to a meeting or would you meet for a coffee to find out more (depending on the formality of the group)?
- Anger is a gift – There is no point telling working class communities experiencing job and housing insecurity that everything is alright and not to be angry. Instead, we should be harnessing that anger and directing it against the system that creates economic insecurity, not at migrants.

There was huge enthusiasm to take on this challenge and to build unity across Norwich.

**Together Norwich is able to provide speakers for local groups and meetings, or organisers to meet and discuss with local community leaders – please contact 07967392229.**

To book a place on the bus to the Together march on March 28<sup>th</sup> in London, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/coach-to-together-alliance-national-demonstration-tickets-1980624463086>

**To view and sign up to the national Together statement, visit [togetheralliance.org.uk](https://togetheralliance.org.uk)**