

North East Anarchist Group Manifesto

NEAG

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Introduction

The North East Anarchist Group (NEAG) is an organisation of anarchist communists based in the North East of England, that aims to help give a voice to anarchists and create an organisational platform from which to conduct revolutionary direct action, agitate the propertied classes and help educate working class people, like us, about our revolutionary potential to emancipate ourselves and create a world free from oppression, hierarchy and violence.

As a group, we seek to achieve this by creating an inclusive space where anarchists and other libertarian socialists are able to voice their ideas, create material and literature and organise to take an active part in the class struggle, fight oppression and further the revolutionary agenda.

NEAG Aims & Principles

Anarchist Communism

1. As anarchist communists, we believe in the revolutionary potential of the working class to establish communism. Communism is defined as a classless, stateless society, in which all people partake in the common ownership and use of the means of production (factories, fields, machinery, infrastructure, etc), for production to meet people's needs, rather than profit. We believe that communism will enable us to put people first, significantly reduce working hours through sustainable and ecological use of automation, technology and cooperation, and provide everyone with necessities of life allowing them to maximise their individual agency. We believe that only a social revolution by the working class (wage labourers, students, unemployed, disabled, etc) will be able to bring about the fundamental changes required to progress towards and implement communism. Without the support of the working class, the social revolution will not be possible.

Our revolution will be the culmination of the class struggle, a pervasive and antagonistic fight between the ruling classes (business owners, politicians, landlords etc) and the working class.

Anti-Capitalism

2. As anarchists we are naturally anti-capitalist. We believe that people cannot be truly free until the private ownership of property and the idea of wage labour are abolished. These systems, and the capitalist socio-economic system itself, are inherently exploitative.

As members of the working class, we have no property and have nothing to sell on the market. As a result, we must sell ourselves (our time, our ability to labour) to the propertied in order to survive. They live by exploiting the surplus value that we create, while many are condemned to a life of abject poverty and precarity, without access to basic necessities such as a home, food, clothing, healthcare, and leisure.

The parasitic behaviour of the propertied classes backed up the state's enforcement of private property through the police, the army, repressive laws and surveillance, ensures that the vast majority of people will never be able to change their material conditions.

We seek to fundamentally change our relationship to 'work' and believe that to secure freedom for everyone, both private property and wage-labour must be abolished, to be replaced with a system based on mutual aid, solidarity and production to meet needs.

We advocate for sustainable automation, but only when the benefits are passed on to the workers.

Anti-Statism

3. As anarchists we oppose any and all states as well as all forms of authority and unjustified hierarchies such as capitalism and class-based systems.

Both authoritarian state ‘socialism’ and the social democrat welfare state model fail to abolish the class system, and so we reject both the Leninist vanguard and electoral politics. Instead, we hold that the only way to bring about a communist society and the full emancipation of the working class is by the revolutionary self-activity of the class itself.

Replacing private corporations with a state cannot create socialism, because the working class remains enslaved to the state and dependent on wage labour for survival. We do not trust any state to bring about socialism since that would require it to voluntarily dissolve its own power, something we do not believe it is capable of doing.

The primary function of government is to protect property from the majority. Capitalism, just like the state, requires authority backed by the threat of violence to protect its own power and preserve private property. These are all forms of coercion and unjustified hierarchies which we will do our best to oppose and dismantle at the earliest possible opportunity.

Politicians claim to serve the public, but in practice they seek to hold power for themselves, leaving the people to beg them to act on their behalf. Meanwhile, politicians and capitalists collude to advance their own class interests.

In our so-called “democratic” societies, democracy is simply absent from many aspects of life. Most notably in the workplace, where workers spend most of their waking hours, and yet have next to no say over the conditions or organisation of their work.

In contrast, we hope to live in a world where people are free to exercise true political control over their own lives, where communities and workplaces can self-organise through consensus decision making, and in which those communities cooperate to tackle larger-scale issues, rather than centralising and giving away their power.

Intersectionality

4. NEAG are an intersectional organisation committed to fighting inequality and bigotry wherever it can be found. Inequality can come in many forms – misogyny, racism, transphobia, homophobia, ableism etc. Tackling inequality is not just about class warfare; it is necessary to oppose all forms of discrimination and hatred. We recognise that the ruling classes use bigotry and discrimination to create and maintain division within the working-class, allowing us to be manipulated in favour of protecting capitalist interests and upholding the status quo and that the abolition of capitalism alone will not bring about social equality. We believe that progress will only be made once socialists begin to dismantle all systems of oppression and authority.

In the current political and social climate, with the mainstream resurgence of right-wing extremism, we maintain our commitment to a militant anti-fascist and anti-racist politics and will work in solidarity with all members of groups that face oppression for a world free from ethnic, racial and gender-based violence.

See our statement on transphobia [here](#).

Internationalism

5. NEAG remains fully committed to the cause of internationalism and aspires to build a movement where one of the primary objectives is the abolition of borders and nation states. We reject nationalism and promote solidarity and cooperation based on class rather than nationality or place of birth. We recognise that nationalism, and the nation state, are the tools of oppression which are used to maintain capitalist and Western hegemony and that borders are some of the most violent sites of racial, ethnic and gender-based violence. Borders are arbitrary lines drawn on maps that serve no purpose other than division. We do not subscribe to the nationalism and imperialism of the capitalist state nor do we agree with the Marxist-Leninist view of state 'socialism'. We believe that socialism cannot be achieved in one country and that the state apparatus not only perpetuates the unjustified cycles of hierarchy and oppression but is simply inadequate in bringing about a socialist revolution. The working class has no nationality.

We maintain a commitment to opposing imperialism and colonialism, particularly in the global South and believe that the foundation of modern capitalism and Western hegemony lie in the exploitation of the working-classes in 'underdeveloped' countries, allowing capitalist exploitation, through imperialist war, or neo-colonial economic sanctions, to adversely affect local populations and their land. We understand that many nations around the world were built upon the genocide of indigenous people, originally by the British and other Europeans and later by the settlers and their descendants who currently reside there, and as a result, we support full de-colonisation efforts, through reclaiming stolen land and a modern, radical education.

Ecology and Environmentalism

6. We believe that we are in a unique and challenging period within the history of humanity, as well as within the epoch of capitalism. The progression of our industrial capacities since the industrial revolution, while not only subjugating people to oppression, misery and exploitation have also been immense burden on our environment and the animals and ecosystems that we share this world with. We are now faced with irreversible climate change caused predominantly by the wasteful and unrelenting aggression of the capitalist socio-economic system.

We recognise that the 'West' are disproportionately responsible for this climate catastrophe and that the excessive consumption of the vast majority of people in the global North has been at the cost of those in the global South. As we see the climate crisis deepen, we expect to see a further increase in migration from the global south to more hospitable areas of the world, chiefly the North. Due to this, we expect to see an increase in racist border violence and eco-fascistic rhetoric, and we make it clear that we stand in solidarity with our international working-class siblings and adhere to a strict rejection of racist, nationalistic, fascist responses to this global crisis.

We believe that if we hope to tackle climate change we need a fundamental change in our social, economic and political systems that look to increase local and regional autonomy within production, grant independence and freedom to the global south and addresses our current culture of mass consumption and waste.

Direct Action

7. Whilst living under capitalism, it is important that we build autonomous projects and organisations that are outside the control of the ruling class and the State apparatus that are run directly by, and for, working-class people. We believe that workplace organising, tenants and prisoner unions, free radical education sessions and literature, protest and community organising are all important for empowering people and building a sustainable and robust network of committed revolutionaries. We believe in a diversity of tactics and that our direct actions, projects and organisations can not only work to help people in need, but through our collective efforts, can build alternative structures, relationships and even change the way we perceive society, preparing us for a more communistic society, which has its foundation in individual agency, mutual aid and cooperation.

We believe in solidarity, not charity.

Anti-Sectarianism

8. We are an anti-sectarian anarchist organisation and will strive to cooperate with existing anarchist and socialist groups providing that our goals align and that cooperation would be beneficial in reaching our desired goal. We draw a line however, at working with any other organisation that partakes in any form of prejudiced, oppressive, exploitative activities. We also believe that certain differences (see point 4, 5 above) on the left cannot be reconciled and that our position will not be compromised in the name of 'left unity'.

Workplace Organisation

9. We support all workers in organising collectively in their workplaces and communities, educational institutions, prisons, and seek to promote and engage with grassroots collective action and struggles in all parts of the working class. This includes support for revolutionary syndicalism and anarcho-syndicalist unions (for example the IWW, Solfed and the IWGB) and for rank and file movements of workers whether within or outside of official organisations. This also includes support for these tactics in the community context, such as claimants and tenants unions, autonomous community organisations, and tactics such as rent strikes, tax strikes or other sorts of social strike.

We oppose reformist trade unionism which seeks to compromise with rather than overthrow capitalism, or subsumes the will of the workers into officials speaking on behalf of workers, who so often betray them. However, we also acknowledge workers must struggle for their interests within the political terrain as it actually exists, and therefore understand and do not condemn workers for using these forms when it is the only course of action available, for example if a reformist trade union is the only operating union in your workplace. We support actions to radicalise reformist unions and radical or revolutionary action carried out by workers within them.

Fluid, Inclusive, Fun

10. We believe that in order to succeed in abolishing capitalism and hierarchy, and ultimately implementing communism, we must organise in a prefigurative way. This means that our organi-

sational structure, now, must reflect our desired future organisational needs. This works two-fold, to ensure that the organisation remains democratic and that it prepares us for the organisational changes required under communism.

NEAG organises on an inclusive, voluntary and horizontal basis. This means that we have no leaders or bosses, and make group decisions based on consensus between all members, while still creating space for individuals to pursue their own projects. We understand that fun is useful in building solidarity and trust, and so try to allow opportunities for comrades to interact in ways beyond just political organising if they choose. Anarchists that play together stay together.

Our ultimate goal is to create a fun, minimum pressure environment based on solidarity and mutual aid, to help forward the revolutionary agenda of working class emancipation and fight against oppression and exploitation.

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