

COUNCIL STANDS ON ITS HEAD TO APPROVE THE TESCO BID

Yet again big corporation Tesco has used its millions to browbeat local opposition and has been helped on its way by the Tory council. The conversion of the Tramway Hotel in Pakefield into a Tesco Express will mean direct competition for the neighbouring Co-op and Spar stores, the Post Office, and Glendower bakery. Far from "creating jobs" as Tesco claims, businesses and jobs will be destroyed. The experience of other Tesco Expresses shows that they provide no greater variety, no lower prices but they do put local shops out of business.

Waveney's planning officers visited the Tramway and judged that it was a hotel and therefore Tesco would need planning permission to convert it to a store. Yet the council decided to spend thousands on a London barrister and obtained the opposite view. Threatened with dire financial consequences by Woodbridge-based Head of Planning, Philip Ridley, and Waveney's Monitoring Officer, Arthur Charvonia, the Tories supported Tesco against the overwhelming opposition of Pakefield residents and Labour and Green Councillors. As Wrentham Tory councillor Martin Parsons said, "The rule of law must be obeyed".

This is the same Woodbridge-based Head of Planning, Philip Ridley, who repeatedly urged Waveney councillors to vote in favour of moving 500 council staff out of the town centre to an industrial park a mile away? This is the same Philip Ridley who managed to persuade councillors to ignore planning laws which state that town centre sites must be considered first and that an impact assessment of such a movement must be undertaken? This is the same Monitoring Officer, Arthur Charvonia, who answered a complaint from LCAC by saying that the council hadn't actually

broken the law, that it was all a matter of opinion and that anyway the Council had voted for the move? Could it be that LCAC has no money, nor have the Pakefield campaigners but Tesco has millions to spare? Yes, Ridley and Charvonia and the Tory council have all managed to stand on their heads to help Tesco get its way.

Campaigners are applying for a certificate of lawlessness to get the Tramways reclassified as a mixed use. If the Labour group has now found its voice let it also start acting on the the Lowestoft Hospital closure, the £40m cuts to local mental health provision, the disastrous Riverside Road office project and the Council's plans to cover the whole of the land on the south side of Lake Lothing with housing. Wake up Labour, there's an election coming up.



We didn't vote for these cuts and this is our alternative*...

End tax dodging believed to cost £150 billion a year

Tax the rich

Stop the disastrous foreign wars, expenditure on weapons of mass destruction and invest in green jobs

Stop the bankers paying themselves obscene bonuses

Levy a Robin Hood tax on bank turnover

*Resolution passed at LCAC launch rally - 2 March, 2011

LOWESTOFT COALITION

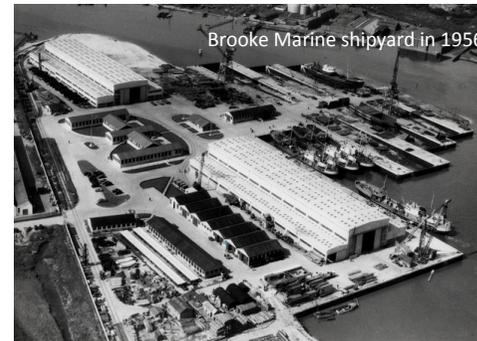
AGAINST THE CUTS

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JOBS OR HOUSES FOR LOWESTOFT?

Council Leader Colin Law and the Tory Council have continually failed to show any awareness of Lowestoft's accelerating decline or to provide any clear plan to halt it. There are finely illustrated documents galore but start dates and funding are absent. The schedule for a possible third crossing? It could be looked at no sooner than ten years from now. The only visible action is house building.



The question to be addressed now is the future of the industrial land occupied by the old Sanyo and Brooke Marine sites on the south of Lake Lothing. Should the existing buildings be developed as small industrial units and the docks brought back into use, reserving the rest of the land for housing? Or should the buildings be demolished and the docks filled in so that all the land can be devoted to housing?

The question blew up at the recent Lowestoft Conference with heated exchanges involving Colin Law and property developer Peter Colby. Colby proposes the

first solution and is willing to buy and develop both sites. The Council is rushing to put up more houses and is in the process of buying the Sanyo site having trumped a price agreed with the owners by Peter Colby. These differing views also involve questions about contamination of the sites, flood risks and costs to the Council. And of course a third crossing.

LCAC wants more and better public transport: the current growth in car use is not sustainable in either practical or environmental terms. Any campaign for better transport should include, for example, more carriages on the Norwich line and sorting out the track at Reedham.

Will a third crossing help in the regeneration of Lowestoft? Could it make the reuse of the Sanyo and Brooke Marine sites more viable for industrial purposes? More housing, profitable though it is for the Council, is a dead end for Lowestoft. The town needs jobs. The two sides should start talking now about the Colby barrage and his plans for regeneration before it is too late.



***The next Peter Colby public meeting is on Wednesday 11 June, 7pm
Hotel Victoria, Kirkley Cliff Road***

FOR THE LATEST NEWS, VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE
lowestoftagainstthecuts.org.uk

LOWESTOFT, ELECTIONS AND LCAC

As long ago as 1985 Waveney District Trades Council held a march through Lowestoft, labelled "The March of Shame". Lowestoft was then still a major manufacturing town and fishing port. The Trades Council was protesting about factory closures and job losses which were causing new and unprecedented levels of unemployment in the town.

The names of lost firms now include Brooke Marine and Richards shipyards, the Co-op and Mortons canning factories, Boulton and Paul's joinery factory, Pye (later Sanyo) all on land to the south of Lake Lothing. To the north was Eastern Coachworks, the Shell base and Bally Shoes. The harbour held some 50 trawlers in the seventies and off-shore support vessels came and went.

All of those jobs, skilled and unskilled, thousands of them have gone. There was not an immigrant to be seen, nor a Romanian to be blamed.

Blundeston Prison has now been closed, the Cefas laboratory could well be moved away. Of local jobs and services the Court is threatened, Lowestoft Hospital is to be closed and the Town Hall too. Waveney District Council shares services with Suffolk Coastal Council, with Suffolk County Council and Suffolk shares with Norfolk. Jobs go and it is hailed as a triumph.

Up and down the shopping precinct zero hours contracts proliferate. The one large factory left and the town's newest pub operate them. The Council's outsourced services Waveney Norse and Sentinel Leisure Trust operate them. Virtually every job is insecure. The bedroom tax punishes those with a "surplus" room. There are cuts to housing benefit, council tax benefit, rising council and private rents. Most benefits go to those in work; most were introduced because work didn't pay enough. Those benefits are now being taken away.

The problem isn't that people are angry and frustrated. The problem is that there isn't a credible party which has the answers, a party which recognises that we are getting poorer because the rich are getting richer. Labour, for all its banging on about the "cost of living crisis", says it will continue with the present Tory cuts. UKIP blames immigrants and the EU. Nigel Farage wants to cut income tax for the rich and build a grammar school in every town, policies which guarantee that the rich would get even richer.



The Greens are more radical than Labour but not totally convincing. On the left the Trade Union and Socialist Coalition and Left Unity both understand the issue but performed poorly.

There is less than a year to the next general election. Disillusion, frustration and confusion are the dominant feelings amongst voters; the outcome is unclear. LCAC will continue to campaign against the cuts and the continuing attacks on workers whoever they are and wherever they come from.

EUROPEAN ELECTION RESULTS FOR THE EASTERN REGION

1. Patrick James O'Flynn (UKIP)
2. Vicky Ford (Con)
3. Richard Howitt (Lab)
4. Stuart Agnew (UKIP)
5. Geoffrey Van Orden (Con)
6. Tim Mark Aker (UKIP)
7. David Campbell Bannerman (Con)

CAMPAIGNS BY LCAC

LCAC campaigns against cuts and closures, job losses and benefit cuts.

The consultation over the future of Lowestoft Hospital was so loaded as to make a vote against its closure virtually impossible. Great Yarmouth and Waveney CCG (aka HealthEast) "preferred option" promised two new health centres and unlimited services with no mention of cost. The hospital would close and instead beds would be bought in private nursing homes. The option of keeping the hospital involved a repair bill of some £10m with no mention of new services. Yet significant numbers rejected HealthEast's plan and LCAC's straw poll saw an almost unanimous vote to keep the hospital.

Curiously new Chief Executive of NHS England, Simon Stevens, agrees with LCAC. He wants local, smaller hospitals to treat patients closer to home. We await Andy Evans' (HealthEast's Chief Exec.) resignation. Our complaint over his "consultation" is being investigated by the Ombudsman.

The local government ombudsman is not so helpful. Our complaint that Waveney District Council deliberately broke planning laws and misled councillors who debated the plan to ship 500 council jobs from

town centre to an enterprise zone a mile out of town is just too much. If one or two could suffer from the Riverside Road decision there would be a case. But damage to the whole town? Its a problem. We have appealed. If you have a business which might be affected – let us know.

The consultation to slash local mental health services was voted "a sham" by the meeting in Lowestoft and the one in Beccles called for resignations. Two wards and the day centre at Carlton Court Hospital



had been closed before the "consultation" started. These dreadful plans are obviously driven by £40m funding cuts and everybody knows it.

The James Paget Hospital isn't immune. We have learnt that because targets for elective surgery are being missed patients are offered treatment in private hospitals. Most have refused. Underfunding of NHS hospitals means that they are being set impossible targets. They are set up to fail and further privatisation is the intention and the outcome.

Suffolk's care homes are now in the tender hands of CareUK, part of the private equity firm Bridgepoint. LCAC warned against the sell off by Suffolk County Council and staff have already suffered cuts. In Doncaster CareUK is attempting to cut nurses and care workers pay by 35% and has sparked continuing strike action. Labour Leader and Doncaster MP Ed Miliband has refused to support the Doncaster strikers. Waveney TUC and LCAC raised £63 for the striking workers at their recent May Day festival.

If you want to oppose the cuts and the privatisations email us at lowestoftagainstthecuts@hotmail.co.uk to go on our email list and join our campaigns

WHAT YOU CAN DO...

- Support LCAC by joining our leafleting every Saturday, 11-1pm, in the town centre precinct, outside the Britten Centre.
- Join our email list - keep up to date with activity in your area.
- Photocopy this leaflet and pass onto friends and workmates.
- Support the local libraries campaign - contact Pauline on 01502 586412.
- Want to know more? We can supply a speaker for your group or trade union branch.

**Contact us
lowestoftagainstthecuts@hotmail.co.uk
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