

'REFORMS' THROW LOCAL SCHOOLS INTO CHAOS...



Picket line at Benjamin Britten High, 8 October

East Point Academy (aka Kirkley Community High School) has been out of and back in special measures since being taken over by Essex-based AET in 2011. Several head teachers later the initial "delight" has disappeared and the London-based Department for Education and Chaos has decided on a different sponsor. The Inspiration Trust, which has close links to the Tory Party and the DfE, and whose Chief Executive, Rachel de Souza, was involved in the leaked "the inspectors are coming" row has been chosen. Neither staff, students, parents or even the current Principal, Neil Powell, have been consulted.

Money troubles at the new Pakefield High School have re-emerged. Perched on an inadequate site at the insistence of Suffolk County Council, it was bailed out with £7.5m of council money when the government stopped the

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

funding. The school is now faced with cutting its teaching budget as it has no money to equip new buildings. Computers or tables and chairs or teachers is the choice.

...BUT SOLID STRIKE WINS THE DAY

A solid strike at Benjamin Britten High School by NASUWT members saw some 30 determined members of staff picket the school. Headteacher, Andrew Hine, and the School's Board of Governors have been attempting to add conditions to performance related pay (PRP) which have not been agreed with teachers' unions.

One striker told LCAC that targets and league tables, the centralised control of teaching and the transfer of schools to unaccountable academies have produced not one jot of improvement, in fact things had got worse. PRP is not only a stupid idea its main purpose is to divide and control teachers. The teachers are right to strike.

Faced with obdurate management teachers continued their strike for a second week and won. Bizarrely an OFSTED inspection took place with hardly any pupils or teachers in the school. NASUWT president Geoff Branner and NUT's Graham White who were visiting the picket line offered to speak with Andrew Hine, but he was "too busy with OFSTED" to see them, only to change his mind five minutes later. The next day management backed down.

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.
- Forward this leaflet and pass onto friends and workmates.
- Want to know more? We can supply a speaker for your group or trade union branch.

Contact us

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SCANDALS HALT LOWESTOFT CARE HOME OPENING

New CareUK home Mildenhall Lodge had scarcely opened when the Care Quality Commission (CQC) issued it with an enforcement order "to protect the health, safety and welfare of people using this service."

CQC findings included the wrong diet given to a diabetes sufferer, the inability to find staff, call bells left ringing and "a patient being hospitalised because their food was not correctly prepared."

The partner of one resident said that "there is never enough staff", that his partner was "in bed most of the day" and had "been left with soiled clothing. When CareUK took over from Suffolk County Council very experienced staff left. Since they went to Mildenhall Lodge problems have got worse. I have raised these concerns many times with SCC and Care UK and they never sort it out, or admit there is an issue."

Now after an emergency inspection, new admissions to a second CareUK home, Asterbury Place in Ipswich, have been stopped. There is no mention of these scandals on CareUK's cheery website.

Stradbroke Court and Blyford in Lowestoft and The Dell in Beccles, described by staff as "where we learned to do things correctly", have also been turned over to CareUK and a new home, Britten Court, is being built to house the residents. Experienced staff have left and new staff hired on worse conditions. UNISON

reports that staff wages have been cut by up to 14%. The neglect is predictable.

Suffolk County Council's deal commits them to sending 370 elderly people to CareUK homes and paying more than to other homes – because CareUK, they say, has had to borrow to pay for the new homes (£60m from Schroeders and Legal and General). Money meant for care goes to CareUK and to the banks.



Striking CareUK workers in Doncaster

CareUK has form. It was stripped of the contract to provide home care to elderly people in Broadland, Norfolk. Its notorious conduct towards care workers and nurses in Doncaster, of cutting pay and downgrading conditions, has provoked a strike which has so far lasted over 80 days.

Britten Court's opening

has now been "postponed" but the underlying conditions of the privatisation remain. Will CareUK pay its staff at the very least a living wage? Will it guarantee high quality training so that residents can be cared for compassionately and professionally? Or will profit come first?

Will CareUK even face rigorous questioning? A CareUK smoothie said that things were being put right while SC Councillor Dr Alan Murray defended the sell-off and said that he was "encouraged." And that was the end of that. LCAC called the deal between Suffolk County Council and CareUK "shameful" when it was proposed in 2012. It should be terminated and CareUK should be prosecuted.

lowestoftagainstthecuts.org.uk

BRITAIN NEEDS A PAY RISE



100,000 on TUC demonstration, 18 October

Coaches from Yarmouth, Norwich, Ipswich and Lowestoft brought demonstrators from the region to join the TUC's Britain Needs a Pay Rise march in London on Saturday the 18th October after a week of industrial action by public sector workers. The Lowestoft contingent joined UNITE trade unionists near the head of the lively and noisy march and arrived in Hyde Park as part of a 90,000 strong crowd. Teachers, civil servants, nurses, communication workers, fire fighters and tube workers were joined by pensioners, anti-war campaigners and, of course, Waveney TUC and Lowestoft Coalition against the Cuts.

Underlying the protest was the deepest cut to workers' wages ever endured and the intention by all the political parties to continue with those cuts. Many speakers pleaded with the Labour Party. "Stop being scared of your own shadow," said Unite's Len McCluskey. The real anger came from FBU leader Matt Wrack whose members are deeply involved in real struggle against cuts to their pensions and conditions, and PCS Secretary Mark Serwatka who called for unions to unite in action. "If we don't strike

together" he said "we'll be back here in this park in a year's time."

The TUC says that Britain Needs a Pay Rise, but what will the TUC do when Britain doesn't get a pay rise?

TONY KELLY 1937-2014

After a very short illness Tony Kelly died aged 77 on Oct 14th in the James Paget Hospital and received a humanist funeral at Gorleston Crematorium on the 20th of October followed by a celebration of his life at the Bear and Bells in Beccles.

To say that Tony was a lifelong campaigner is an understatement. Wherever he was he would look to join in the struggle for a better world. His favourite saying was, "If you tell me where the revolution is, I'll be there." He worked as a merchant seaman, a printer, at Fords of Dagenham and lived for a while on the coast of Georgia.

After retiring he moved from the Isle of White to Beccles and supported ESTA, the railway pressure group, attended Beccles Town Council meetings, to some effect, and was an active member of LCAC. He cycled over from Beccles to join our leafleting up until a few weeks before his death and attended the Burstn Strike School rally on September 7th when he was already diagnosed as being seriously ill. There he set himself and completed the task of photographing every stall on the green.

It was typical that a few days before his death he pinned up a newspaper cutting in his hospital room. It was for his nurses and it told of the pressures that nurses were working under.

Our condolences go to his widow Margaret. We offer her all our best wishes for the future.

AN EVENING WITH MR RIDLEY

Half of Waveney District Council is in the hands of officers at Suffolk Coastal Council based down the A12 in the picturesque old town of Woodbridge. Amongst them is Head of Planning Philip Ridley, noted for ignoring planning laws when he recommended the disastrous move of 500 council staff to an industrial park a mile from the town centre and for standing on his head in an attempt to get planning permission for Tesco to take over the Tramway Hotel in Pakefield.



Philip Ridley

The latest Development Control Committee considered allowing 72 private beach huts on Pakefield Promenade, bordering on a previously unspoilt, almost wild stretch of beach which lacks parking, water, toilets or lifeguards. Labour Councillor Sonya Barker, with the backing of Pakefield residents, put the case against cogently and forcefully. To no avail. After a rambling discussion Mr Ripley, looking down on the councillors from the top table, said that it was OK, the Labour group was in disarray, Pakefield Labour Councillor Pitchers voted in support and planning permission was granted.

The big issue was the plan by Cardy Construction to build 850 houses on the sites that once held Brooke Marine and Jeld Wen, and still contain docks, industrial buildings, a wildlife site, playing fields and businesses relating to the lakeside site, businesses that employ about 120 people.

Labour's Nick Webb, with the backing of local campaigner Mike Warner, residents and businesses, prospective Labour MP Bob Blizzard, developer Peter Colby and a host of opponents who had protested outside and filled the Council Chamber as well as an overflow room, put the case against cogently and

forcefully. A major part of his argument was the loss of prime waterfront sites which could and should be developed for industrial use.

Another rambling discussion ensued. Nothing was said about who the homes were for, or how these new residents would earn a crust. Southwold Tory councillor Sue Allen was annoyed by people who said that jobs were needed first. The "marina" and the foot and cycle bridge across Lake Lothing although pictured in the implausible illustrations turned out not to be part of the plan, just an artist's impression. The imaginary boats would be unreachable from the houses on stilts. The "shops, cafes and bars" were equally works of imagination. Our good friend Mr Ridley batted away objections and reduced the councillors to silence. Labour Councillor Julian Swainson and Green Graham Elliot focussed on the imaginary bridge, Swainson in the hope that its absence would allow a deferral of the decision, Elliot because he believes in cycling. The talented Mr Ridley half promised them an imaginary commitment "you have my assurance and commitment that the planning authority will do its best to endeavour to secure the delivery of the bridge."

With that Beccles' Councillor Elliot voted to approve the plan, apparently unaware that Associated British Ports would scotch any idea of a bridge. Labour's Malcolm Pitchers, famous for his rhetorical question during the debate on keeping Council jobs in the town centre, "But where are all the shoppers going to park?", apparently unaware of the half-empty car parks, abstained. This unlikely alliance meant that the plan was approved and Mr Ridley could pack up his wrecking ball and happily drive back to Woodbridge.



Town hall demonstration, 16 October