

HOSPITAL CLOSURES: A BETRAYAL OF THE NHS



HealthEast consultation meeting, Southwold, 10 June

Health East, the Clinical Commissioning Group for Great Yarmouth and Waveney, plans to save £4.3m by closing hospitals in Halesworth and Southwold while Northgate and All Hallows will lose their 20 beds. Instead, out-of-hospital teams will treat patients in their own homes or they will be sent to care homes. A private care home is planned on NHS land in Reydon near Southwold and another in Halesworth. In Beccles 21 beds will be left to service the whole of Yarmouth,

Waveney and much of the surrounding areas. Beccles Hospital has apparently been spared because it isn't owned by the NHS.

Local community hospitals, mental health services, the James Paget Hospital and the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital are in crisis because of major funding cuts. Faced with an increase in the number of patients, particularly an increase in elderly patients, the NHS was told to make £20bn of "efficiency savings" over five years. Staff have paid for this through frozen salaries.

If the NHS budget were to keep pace with inflation and more "efficiency savings" created, the gap in the next five years will be a minimum of £30bn. That means more cuts and more privatisation. It is a fiction that the NHS is "protected". Repetition does not make it true.

Local GPs offered an alternative to the closure of Lowestoft Hospital but were ignored. Lead consultant in A&E at the James Paget Hospital, Duncan Peacock, says it is an illusion that the NHS can work with fewer beds and that the NHS needs more beds not fewer. Health East's CEO Andy Evans will cut to budget. That is his job.

In Halesworth a meeting of over 300 including experienced health professionals heard of major weaknesses in Health East's plans.

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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

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 it 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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LOWESTOFT COALITION AGAINST THE CUTS

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LABOUR LEADERSHIP CONTEST: JEREMY CORBYN WAKES UP THE COUNTRY

Immediately after the General Election respected BBC political correspondent John Pienaar interviewed, or rather listened to, the old fraud Peter Mandelson. Trade and Industry Secretary under Tony Blair, Mandelson is notorious for his comment that the Blair government "was intensely relaxed about people getting filthy rich".

THE OLD FRAUD MANDELSON

Mandelson got filthy rich as did Tony Blair, Alan Milburn, Patricia Hewitt and a host of other ex-Labour ministers. They moved on to join companies profiting from the privatisation of public services, the process started by Thatcher and hurried on by Blair, Mandelson and their friends.

Rather than strengthening the position of working people the Blair government used tax credits and encouraged personal debt to compensate for that continuing shift in wealth to the wealthiest. That was the economic and political failure of the Blair years. The banks took full advantage of Labour being "intensely relaxed about people getting filthy rich" and grew fat on irresponsible lending. An economy built on massive debt is

unsustainable, the debt bubble burst and the crash of 2008 was the inevitable result. We bailed out the banks and we, not the bankers



Jeremy Corbyn



Peter Mandelson

and certainly not Blair and the old fraud Mandelson, are being forced to pay for the bail-out. As bad, the Blair government led credulous MPs into a war that was disastrous for the people of the Middle East and now, for us as well. Yet mega-rich Blair intervenes only to insult Jeremy Corbyn.

The old fraud Mandelson was treated by Pienaar as a guru. The defeat of Ed Miliband was the result of abandoning New Labour policies, he said, of being too left wing, of being hostile to business. Pienaar didn't challenge him. In other interviews Pienaar pushed the same line. Blair won three elections for Labour, he prompted. When one stumbling Labour stalwart was stuck for words, Pienaar helpfully filled in, "the middle ground, where elections are won and lost".

WHAT DOES LABOUR BELIEVE IN?

This is nonsense. Labour lost in Scotland far more spectacularly than in England. The Scottish

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www.lowestoftagainstthecuts.org.uk

THE MAN WHO WOULD BE PRIME MINISTER



Mocking the Labour Party's modest policies, Chancellor George Osborne called his emergency budget "a Budget for working people" but his "new settlement" sounded rather like a Russian tzar tossing brass coins to his gullible serfs.

TUC leaders must have winced when Osborne grabbed their late slogan and declared that "Britain needs a pay rise". The minimum wage goes up from £6.50 to £7.50 for over 25s from April. Employers could neutralise this by cutting hours. Cuts to benefits will anyway make 5m workers much worse off than they are now. Capping benefits will drive some from their homes; those with larger families will be worst hit. The spending cuts will help pay off the debt incurred by rescuing the banks.

Some get real benefits. Osborne announced another cut to Corporation Tax, down to 19%, the lowest in the G7 (7 richest nations). An increase in the personal Income Tax allowance to £11,000 next year applies to everyone not just the lowest earners, while the higher rate threshold will rise to £43,300 in 2017 at which point 40p in the pound is paid on income above that level. There are no higher bands. A couple with up to £650,000 now pay no Inheritance Tax; in future wealthy families will be able to pass on £1m without paying anything.

Young people get it hard. The new minimum wage won't apply to them; they won't be

entitled to housing benefit. Student grants which help the poorest are to be abolished.

The next big privatisation is the BBC. Its income is effectively cut and this beacon of high quality and a degree of impartiality will be neutered. Greedy media moguls and vengeful Tories intend to strip it to the bone. We will be offered more programmes, mainly rubbish, and have to pay many times the cost of the BBC licence for it.

AND YET MORE...

Osborne then asked for plans for two scenarios – further cuts of 25% and 40%. They include mergers and cuts to local councils with whole services being scrapped or privatised, public service pay cuts, and so on.

Multi-millionaire George Osborne, the man who wants to be Prime Minister, is aiming to privatise much of the state. Corporations and wealthy private individuals will enrich themselves while the workers they employ will see their pay and conditions degraded. Ask the workers at CareUK, the awful company Suffolk County Council chose to sell its care homes to.

JEREMY CORBYN WAKES UP THE COUNTRY

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National Party (SNP) wiped out the Tories, the Lib Dems and Labour exactly because it didn't attempt to woo "the (elusive) middle ground". Labour lost in both countries because it huddled fearfully in no man's land wearing hand-me-down Tory policies. Now Andy Burnham, Yvette Cooper and Liz Kendall want to pinch a bit more of the Tory and the UKIP agendas and imagine that that will win them an election. It won't.

Three of the four candidates for the Labour leadership go along with Mandelson and Blair. Andy Burnham, originally portrayed as the "left" candidate, chose a speech to international auditors (and tax advisers) Ernst & Young to announce that "wealth creators" should be treated as "heroes". Ernst & Young is the company which audited bankrupt Lehman Brothers, the bank which started the financial crash that went around the world. They failed to report Lehman's bankruptcy and were fined a mere \$10m for negligence.

None of them seem to realise that those in "the middle ground" are also suffering from Tory policies. Teachers, nurses, solicitors, youth workers, librarians, middle managers and many more are seeing their jobs eliminated and their pay frozen. Few can afford to buy a home without parental help. Most are condemned to living forever in rented private property as insecure there as they are in their jobs. Their parents are well aware of the situation that their children are in. Much to the consternation of Burnham, Cooper and Kendal, most Labour party members and supporters understand that too.

Inequality in Britain is now back to pre-First World War levels. Foreign oligarchs flock to London to stash their wealth. The country is awash with money yet Labour leadership hopefuls Burnham, Cooper and Kendal are fearful to even raise the possibility of taxing these people. Or of supporting labour as it struggles against further cuts. They intend to lead a "Labour opposition" intent on not supporting labour and not opposing the Tories.

JEREMY CORBYN CAN WIN

These three candidates and most political commentators are left bemused and confused by the popularity of Jeremy Corbyn. He speaks to young and old, to the poor and those in "the middle ground". They agree when he says that it wasn't the great mass of the people who caused the crash. They don't want hospitals closed and care homes privatised. They don't want to see fellow citizens impoverished while the bankers enrich themselves. Importantly young people and those who failed to vote or even register to vote have also woken up.

Andy Burnham, Yvette Cooper and Liz Kendall

fail to see the obvious; the Blair years were a disaster for working people. Searching for a mythical "middle ground" is inherently stupid. Geologists know that the ground shifts. These three don't. That is why Jeremy Corbyn can win the Labour leadership contest and go on to win a general election.

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Andy Evans' claim that fewer patients from Lowestoft needed to go to the James Paget Hospital fell apart. More are sent to other community hospitals because the James Paget is full.



Andy Evans

These plans are simply property deals and the privatisation of the NHS. Halesworth and Southwold Hospitals will be sold and turned into turned into expensive apartments while the staff in a private care home can be paid next to nothing. These are a desperate and dangerous responses to cuts - dressed up as improvements. They should be rejected outright.

LOWESTOFT COALITION AGAINST THE CUTS

Next meeting

Monday 24 August, 7.30pm

**United Reformed Church
London Road North
Lowestoft
(opp Poundstretcher)**

All welcome