



Bury Branch Labour Party

THE RED LETTER

The letter that keeps you posted...

Website

<http://www.labourburystedmundssuffolk.org.uk>

Facebook

Bury-St-Edmunds-Constituency-Labour-Party-1523378467961967/?fref=ts

Twitter

@burystedlabour

Issue 1

March 2016



Inside this Issue

Cuts to the Fire Service 1

Post Office Closure

Post Office Closure 2

Branch contact Details

EU "In" campaign 3
Richard Howitt

A Labour Councillor's Working Day.

The NHS 4

Quentin Cornish

Thoughts from The Editor

A Burning Issue - Cuts to the Fire Service

Did you know that 8/10 of our fire stations in the county are now out of service?

We at Bury Branch Labour Party are deeply concerned about the proposal to cut fire engines throughout Suffolk and particularly in Bury St Edmunds. We consider the proposal to remove one engine in the town to be dangerous and morally indefensible.



One fire appliance down...saves money but not lives!

The proposal is to remove one out of three response appliances from the Bury St Edmunds station supposedly thus saving £72,000 per year.

This action will impact on emergency response times as appliances will be called on from other parts of the county putting lives and premises in danger.

Bury St Edmunds is a thriving town set to grow substantially by 2031. As well as being the home to West Suffolk General Hospital it also houses two sites that have special conditions attached to them because of the risk they pose: Calor Gas at Little Saxham as well as R C Treatt and Co. Ltd.

The Fire Authority admits there is a direct link between economic deprivation and fire risk. Labour believes it is wrong to put a price tag on people's safety and that the most vulnerable should be protected from these cuts.

Tories Tear the Heart out of Bury St Edmunds...

Shock plans to outsource Bury St Edmunds Crown Post Office have been strongly criticised by the Bury St Edmunds Branch Labour Party, who have accused the Government of "blatant privatisation."

Post Office Limited announced they are seeking 'franchise partners' within the retail sector for the Bury St Edmunds Crown Office. The workers at the Cornhill branch are facing the choice of either a 'settlement agreement', 'redeployment' or 'transfer of employment (TUPE)' to one of the chosen 'franchise partners' who are expected to include WH Smith. This would result in the specialist, standalone Crown Post Office, which has served the public of Bury St Edmunds since 1896, being replaced by a small Post Office unit within a retail premise.

When Royal Mail was privatised, the government said that they would keep the Post Office wholly in the public sector, but franchising is privatisation by the back door. If the post Office is seeking franchising partners then the most obvious candidate is being ignored: Royal Mail, a natural synergy. The Post Office should never have been split from Royal Mail. It should be the shop window for Royal Mail services.

While the Post Office attempts to cut its way to further profit, a more progressive approach needs to be adopted. A better approach would be expansion, innovation,



THE RED LETTER

Post Office Closures continued.....

developing new products and winning a greater market share. A policy of managed decline, cutting jobs, closing branches, dismantling the network and selling buildings is not the way forward.

The iconic Cornhill building has been the home of the Post office in Bury St Edmunds for 120 years. It is the heart of our town centre and should not be sacrificed for greed and profit.

This is yet another horrendous example of broken promises, irresponsible government and chronic mismanagement of the Post Office network. The Cornhill Post Office only recently underwent a refurbishment which saw the counter area, training facilities and meeting rooms upgraded at a cost of over a million pounds.

The Post Office is a public service, designed to give wonderful customer service, which the counter staff at the Cornhill branch have excelled at. We must oppose the closure of our Crown Office and fight to keep it open. This Tory government may have privatised Royal Mail and are unashamedly attempting to privatise the Post Office but the service belongs to the people of this country: it's the Peoples Post.

Only a Labour Government and Labour councillors would fight to stop Crown Post Offices being sold to the highest bidder.



David Cull member Bury Town Branch Labour Party

THE RED LETTER

Branch Information

Please help us to make The Red Letter lively and interesting by sending your ideas or articles for inclusion to the Public Relations Officer and Editor of the Red Letter.

E-mail: catemhadley@gmail.com. Tel: 07966 550753

The number of attendees has grown enormously over the last few months and three new volunteer appointments have been made covering youth, equality and public relations.

Why not come along and see what's going on for yourself? We always meet on the third Thursday in the month at 7.30 pm at **Oddfellows Hall, 85 Whiting Street, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 1NX**

Facebook: Search for 'Bury St Edmunds Constituency Labour Party' Twitter: @burystedlabour

Web: <http://www.labourburystedmundssuffolk.org.uk>



Stop Press...

I.E.R. Don't lose your vote—Individual Electoral Registration. Are you on the electoral register? If not then you can't vote.

Online - www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/council/voting:

*Tel St Edmundsbury Borough Council for further advice
01284 763233*



THE RED LETTER

EU In-Out? Richard Howitt's Story



Richard Howitt MEP for the East of England believes that Britain should stay in the EU.

Condensed into five main headings his rationale for this stance is as follows:

- Jobs - Access to the world's single largest market which supports 3.5 million jobs.
- Crime - EU members work together to fight cross border criminal activities.
- Our Place in the World - Our EU voice challenging poverty and human rights violations.
- Rights and Protection - Protecting against discrimination, providing a safety net of dignified treatment across Europe.
- Environment and Energy - The EU works together to protect us in the face of environmental disasters and pandemics.

Have your say. Contact: catemhadley@gmail.com

THE RED LETTER

A Snapshot of Labour Councillor Diane Hind's Working Day



AM

- Started at 9.45 am.
- Attended the unveiling of a new housing development, a unique collaborative project between Havebury Housing and West Suffolk College. Students drew up initial plans and worked as trainees alongside professional building contractors transforming the site from underused garages to seven new build homes.
- Visited a sheltered housing scheme. With fellow Labour councillor Bob Cockle, arranged for the residents' social committee to receive funding for new equipment.
- Responded to messages from fellow councillors very concerned about an item on a forthcoming 'Overview and Scrutiny Committee Agenda' of which I'm Chair.

PM

- Attended a meeting at West Suffolk House for a briefing on plans for the Bus Station building.
- Checked on tree roots causing pavement problems and emailed Suffolk County Council accordingly
- More reading for the Scrutiny Committee and attending to more emails.
- 7.00 pm time for dinner!

*Councillor Diane Hind
Labour councillor for Northgate Ward*



THE RED LETTER**The NHS today - the facts**

The NHS it embodies our socialist commitment to communal effort and mutual support. I've proud to have worked in it for 40 years. But the NHS is in trouble: demand for healthcare is rising, most hospitals are overspent, there aren't enough staff, junior doctors are striking and services are outsourced to private companies. Why?

1. **We don't spend enough** on health - only two-thirds of the amount per person that Sweden does. 10 EU countries spend more. Nevertheless, every year, the government requires the NHS to save more money - £22 billion by 2020.
2. **The NHS is too small.** Years ago, government decided that more people would be treated at home, so hospitals would shrink as community services grew. Instead, community services were cut to save money, as hospital beds were closed. We now have 3 beds per 1,000 people, the second-lowest in Europe (Germany has 8), but our community services are too stretched to offer good alternatives.
3. **We haven't trained enough** nurses, occupational therapist, physiotherapists, doctors and midwives. There are over 60,000 NHS vacancies in England.
4. **The government isn't serious** about mental health, children's services or care of the elderly. Commissioners are only penalised for long A&E waiting-times, so they put all available money into hospitals. Norfolk and Suffolk Trust is a mess because commissioners cut £44 million from its budget over the last 4 years.
5. **We waste millions of pounds** on competitive tendering; this gave us Serco in Suffolk and unsafe 11 services.
6. **Many right-wingers** want the NHS to wither and die, to be replaced by profitable private healthcare. Oliver Letwin predicted that it would "cease to exist" within 5 years of a Tory election victory - **that's 2020**.

We mustn't take the NHS for granted.

Quentin Cornish

Chair Bury Branch Labour Party

THE RED LETTER

**Postscript: Some thoughts from
the Editor CATE HADLEY**



This is the first issue of The Red Letter - the new Town Branch newsletter - highlighting just a few of the issues of interest to our members. We'd like you to work with us to challenge the Tories in their wide-ranging cut backs which are designed to dismantle our public services, destroy the environment, our communities and our way of life. All of us in the Party hold strong views about social justice and equality.

Like many others I voted for Jeremy Corbyn and returned to the Labour Party recently in the ground swell of labour support. I feel that Corbyn's non-adversarial approach to debate and democracy represents a refreshing change, in a climate where everybody is encouraged to take care of themselves at any cost to others.

Our Conservative county council is privatising and franchising all its services, with little clear or coherent vision of the future. This 'short-termism' will surely backfire. My views may of course not be representative of the branch as a whole. However, that's why it's great to come on board in order to have your say, to be listened to and to have your opinion valued.

E-mail: catemhadley@gmail.com

Tel: 07966 550753