

# News from Lewisham Pensioners' Forum November 2010 [www.lewishampensionersforum.org](http://www.lewishampensionersforum.org)

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Core Office Hours 10am -2pm  
Monday to Thursday  
Please ring in advance of calling in,  
especially if outside of these times.

**NPC** NATIONAL PENSIONERS CONVENTION **New Government: Same Old Problems**

**NPC Rally & Lobby of Parliament** **Wed 27**  
12 noon Protest Old Palace Yard  
1pm Rally, Methodist Central Hall  
2pm Lobby of MPs

Free social  
No attacks on fuel pay

**WHO STOLE OUR PENSIONS?**

**Robert Peston**

Price £2.00

**NPC** NATIONAL PENSIONERS CONVENTION

Copies available at the AGM (see back page)

**OPPOSE ROYAL MAIL PRIVATISATION**

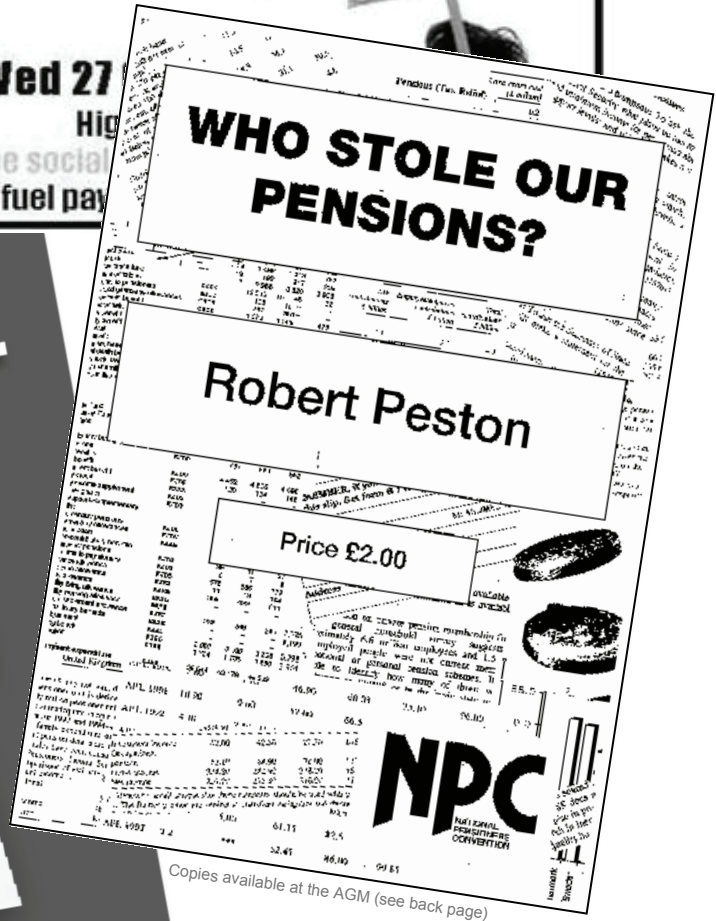
**KEEP THE POST PUBLIC**

**IT'S YOUR ROYAL MAIL AND IT'S NOT FOR SALE!**  
As a public service, Royal Mail is not the property of the politicians – it's the property of the people.

**FOR PUBLIC SERVICE, NOT PRIVATE PROFIT!**  
It provides a unique, one-price-goes-anywhere daily delivery service that no private company would ever provide.

**KEEP THE POST PUBLIC!**  
Royal Mail belongs to the people of the UK  
**Say No** to any sell off.

Picture Credit: <http://www.keepthepostpublic.org/resources.htm>



Picture Credit: NHS Support Federation [www.nhscampaign.org](http://www.nhscampaign.org)

**Do you have an e-mail contact address?** We are committed to the bi-monthly paper newsletter to go to all members by post. However some items crop up between mailings that our members might be interested in and if we have an e-mail we can let you know. Our list is confidential and will not be shared with any other body. E-mail [lpforum@btconnect.com](mailto:lpforum@btconnect.com) to benefit from this service.

# COME TOGETHER TO PROTECT OUR NHS

Aneurin Bevan recognised right from the start of the NHS that ***“it will only survive as long as there are folk left with the faith to fight for it”***.

Lewisham Pensioners Forum is actively opposing the White Paper—the article below captures some of our concerns... ***If you would like to get involved in the Forum’s ‘Save Our NHS’ Campaign, come along to the next meeting in the Saville Centre on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> November at 1.30, or call us on 020 8690 7869 or e-mail [lpforum@btconnect.com](mailto:lpforum@btconnect.com) to go on the NHS group mailing list***

**“If the White Paper is carried through to its logical conclusion, by 2014 there will be no NHS or public sector providers delivering health care services in England. Hospitals, community health services and mental health will all have been forced to become, or join Foundation Trusts, or will have been put out to tender to ‘social enterprises’ or the for-profit private sector.**

Privatisation on this scale is unprecedented anywhere in the world, so there are no direct comparisons that can be made.

However we do know that competition and private sector providers can force standards **down**, as happened when hospital cleaning services were privatised under Thatcher in the 1980s.

The result of that experiment has now been widely recognised as a

catastrophe: a break-up of the NHS team, the casualisation of the workforce, a plunge in hospital hygiene, and the spread of MRSA and hospital infections.

The minimal apparent short-term cash savings made at the expense of their lowest-paid staff by the hospitals which contracted out these services have been subsequently more than swallowed up by inferior quality of services and the costs of additional bed days, closed wards and other problems from hospital acquired infections.

**There is more unhappy experience of private sector involvement.**

Repeated attempts by New Labour to draw the private sector into providing NHS services have also proved costly and delivered questionable results.

Contracts with private hospitals to

deliver waiting list treatment have cost massively more than normal NHS costs, while the delivery of minor elective surgery in “Independent Sector Treatment Centres” cost an average of almost 12% more than the standard NHS price, but also wound up spending millions on operations that did not take place as patients chose to go to NHS hospitals instead.

Private sector bids for primary care contracts have tended to force down the quality of care, reducing prices by employing fewer, less qualified staff than established local GP practices.

Huge questions hang over the quality of services and poor regulation and monitoring of private companies delivering out of hours GP cover.”

*Source: London Health Emergency Issue No. 66, Autumn 2010—White Paper Special Issue*

## Foundation Trusts

The Chief Executive of University Hospital Lewisham (UHL) Tim Higginson, has very kindly twice visited the Forum’s ‘Save Our NHS’ Campaign Group to discuss plans to pursue Foundation Trust for UHL.

And we have always expressed our opposition. Now all NHS Trusts are going to be forced to become Foundation Trusts or be taken over by one.

**London Health Emergency comments:**

*‘Foundations will be removed from the NHS balance sheet. They would all become “social enterprises”, and encouraged to tear up national pay scales for their staff who would no longer be NHS employees. Legal limits on the amount of money Foundations can raise from private medicine are abolished by the White Paper. With NHS funding frozen, this will mean FTs will concentrate on drawing in paying patients from the UK and other countries, and open up a new 2-tier health service.’*

Backed by Lewisham Trades Council, Lewisham NUT,  
Lewisham Anti Cuts Alliance  
and Lewisham Libraries' Campaign

**LOBBY OF LEWISHAM COUNCIL**

***Lewisham against the cuts!***

**Wednesday 17 November, 5:15pm**

Protest against the council as they agree the cuts.

**LOCATION:** Civic Centre, Lewisham

Bring banners, placards; tell your friends

For more information phone Martin on 020 8314 7487

or e-mail [secretary@lewisham.nut.org.uk](mailto:secretary@lewisham.nut.org.uk)

*Notice received from Lewisham NUT*

# Campaign Update - Keeping the Post Office Public

Royal Mail provides a vital public service to our communities, rural and urban alike, but the Government has announced proposals to privatise and break it up. The Communication Workers Union (CWU), which represents the overwhelming majority of Royal Mail employees, is opposed to this plan, because it will put the UK's universal, one-price-goes-anywhere daily delivery service at risk and lead to yet further closures of post offices.

Privatisation would mean the ditching of the public service

principle that has been the cornerstone of Royal Mail throughout its long history.

No private company will consider it profitable to provide a daily, universal, one-price-goes-anywhere service to every isolated rural community or small business the length and breadth of the United Kingdom. If you have similar fears for the future of the Post Office service, the CWU is asking you to write to your Member of Parliament and urge her or him to oppose the Government's sell-off plans.

**You can write to your MP:** House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA  
Alternatively Sign the Petition.

The **'Keep the Post Public'** petition will be available to sign at the Forum's Friday stall in Lewisham Town Centre on 19<sup>th</sup> November and 3<sup>rd</sup> December between 10.30–12 noon. In addition it will also be available to sign at our AGM on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> November (see back page).

Source: <http://www.cwu.org/keep-the-post-public.html>  
(14.10.10)



## Wardens: and the Sheltered Housing Debate

On Wednesday 20 October residents of sheltered housing demonstrated in the London Borough of Barnet against the council's renewed attack on sheltered housing. Barnet council learned in December 2009 that its move to remove resident wardens from sheltered housing schemes in the borough was illegal, contravening disability discrimination legislation. The council has determined to make a second attempt to remove the wardens. If Barnet council succeeds in axing its residential wardens it could give the green light to authorities up and down the land to cut the service. David Young Chair of the UK Pensioners

strategy committee said *"Barnet has seemingly learned nothing about the hurt and fear they are causing the older people that trusted them and gave up their homes to have the support of a resident warden"* - we will keep you posted on this campaign. The Forum's management committee has already confirmed a need to set up a Forum campaign sub group that deals specifically with housing related issues, including wardens and sheltered housing and we plan to launch this after we have heard back from our members attending the Housing Workshop we have co-ordinated with Care & Repair England to discuss 'Housing Choices in Later Life'. ***We will keep you updated and if you want to join the group phone Kerry on 020 8690 7869***

## Age Concern

### Handy Person Project

We understand that the Age Concern Lewisham & Southwark Handy Person Project will be coming to an end because of funding cuts. This is very sad news indeed as we know that many of our members were helped by the services this project made available. The Forum will be expressing its concern to Lewisham Council who supported the project as we fear that this project along with many others that benefit the lives of so many will simply just disappear in pursuit of a damaging cuts programme.



The Forum banner on the Libraries' Campaign march to the Town Hall—Saturday 30 October

**Lewisham Parochial Charities** which runs two almshouses in Ladywell and on Lewisham High Street has a vacancy. For more information and an application pack contact Emily Roberts on 020 8690 8145

### The City of London

currently has an open waiting list for Mais House sheltered scheme in Sydenham Hill (on their Lammas Green Estate) To request an application pack or find out more contact the City of London Housing Options Team on 020 7332 1654 / 1237



# Notice of Forum Annual General Meeting for 2010 Wednesday 24th November, 10.30-12.30

Civic Suite, Catford (easy access by bus)

## AGENDA

- 10.30** Welcome and introductions  
Minutes of AGM 2009  
Presentation of Annual Report 2010  
Presentation of Financial Report – Treasurer  
Appointment of Auditors  
Election of Management Committee 2010/11

Forum Merchandise Table with campaign literature, t-shirts, mugs, opportunities to order photos from 2010 events and the LPF year planner for 2011

**11.15 Guest Speaker:** Following the recent and very well the attended Rally and Lobby of Parliament, we are pleased to welcome **Dot Gibson**— General Secretary of the National Pensioners Convention.

**11.45** Q&A Session & Debate

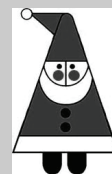
**12.15** Chair's remarks—followed by festive refreshments, card shopping and useful information stalls.

**1.00** Meeting Close

*Information Stalls include*

- *Montage Theatre Company*
- *Ageing Well/Lewisham Churches Care*
- *London Borough of Lewisham Services and other Council Information*

Bring your purse or wallet on the 24<sup>th</sup> as we are pleased to welcome back **Cards for Good Causes**, with packs and bumper value packs of charity cards, advent calendars, wrapping paper, and stocking fillers.  
*Also at St. Alfege's Church, Greenwich.*



## RHYTHM OF LIFE

Montage Theatre Arts is creating a new and exciting inter-generational community musical show to be staged at The Albany Theatre, Deptford in March 2011... and WE NEED YOU!



**Have you ever travelled? Are you interested in singing, dancing or acting?** The theme of the show will be communication and travel and exploring how families across the globe keep in touch. So we would like to speak with lots of people to tell us of your experiences!

**Performing:** We need people to join our performance group and/or to share their travel tales with us. And from January you can join our weekly classes learning numbers and creating this magical show with our young people aged 6 – 16 years together!

**Come and meet friends, have fun and get dancing!**

*If you think you have an interesting story and would like to get in involved in a fun, friendly, community project, then please get in touch with Montage Theatre Arts direct on 020 8692 7007 or [office@montagetheatre.com](mailto:office@montagetheatre.com).*



## Merrill Lynch

are again, through the Greater London Forum (GLF) to whom we are affiliated, offering their **Christmas Calls** on Sunday lunchtime, 12<sup>th</sup> December.

A coach trip to their City offices, festive cheer and a half hour free phone call abroad is what's on offer, but limited places and strictly on a first come, first served basis only.

So please do telephone the Forum office without delay on 020 8690 7869 and speak to Tamsin for details and to book a place.

## London Cinema History Walk

starting from Lewisham Library **11.30 Thursday 25 Nov.** This first walk is free for the first ten 60+ who call Inga (Fashion in Film) on 020 7514 8710 to book, but if demand is high others will be arranged at the cut price rate of £3 per ticket.

Those on our mailing list as individual members will receive with this letter a copy of LB Lewisham's magazine for the over 60s—*My Life*. Lots of useful information and we are glad to be able to pass it on to you.

*If you picked this Forum newsletter up in a library, group or sheltered scheme and would like in future to receive a copy sent free by post to your home address just phone 020 8690 7869 to go on our mailing list.*