



Charity No: 1043081

ISLINGTON PENSIONERS FORUM

The voice of Islington's older community

June 2016 Newsletter

A LETTER FROM SADIQ KHAN

The new London Mayor responds to pensioners' manifesto

The London Region of the National Pensioners Convention sent its manifesto to all the candidates in the London Mayoral Election, and below is the letter received from Sadiq Khan

I'm really grateful that the National Pensioners Convention has given me the opportunity to outline in more detail what I'd do to help London's pensioners should I become Mayor. I warmly welcome your manifesto, and all the work you've done over many years, campaigning on behalf of older Londoners.

I'm standing to be a Mayor for all Londoners, including the millions of older Londoners. I want to be Mayor of a city where everyone can contribute to its success, regardless of their age. In my manifesto for all Londoners, I outlined how I will achieve this with detailed policies on housing, health, jobs, education & skills, transport, the environment, arts & culture and fairness.

On **safety**, you are right to raise the issue of policing and the fire service. Under the Tories, there are 1500 fewer police officers and there's been a 60 per cent cut in neighbourhood policing. London has seen 10 fire stations closed and is losing a further 13 engines. If I'm elected, I'm committed to restoring

neighbourhood policing and to a full review of the city's fire and emergency capabilities to make sure London is able to cope.

You raise the city's **transport** network. Having buses, trains and tubes that are accessible, affordable and efficient is critical to a functioning London. I've committed to a fares freeze for four years, and to protect the Freedom Pass and the Over 60s Oyster Card.

I'll continue investing in modern, clean buses that are accessible to all, and ensure that drivers are trained to understand the specific needs of older passengers. I'll undertake a full review to make sure the bus network is providing sufficient access to the city's hospitals and major health facilities. I'll also invest in making more of our stations fully accessible and ensure Dial-a-Ride and Taxicard continue to provide crucial support for those less able to get around London.

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Annual General Meeting and 30th Anniversary of Islington Pensioners Forum : 1986 - 2016 Thursday 21 July 2016, 10.30 am

This year it is a special AGM. We will have the usual annual reports and the election of the committee, but it is our 30th anniversary and so there will be special guests and a buffet. So please put the date in your diary and make sure that you don't miss it!

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

The Government think tank usually puts forward some ill-thought-out legislation during the holiday period fully aware the public have little knowledge of the subject; this bank holiday was no different! The government is intent on flogging off another of the country's assets, The Land Registry. This belongs to the British people and makes money for us and the government. But the present government's dogma about wishing to privatise our assets is clearly going too far.

There was a full report in *The Guardian* on Thursday 26 May saying even the Markets Authority took the unusual step this week of warning that selling the Land Registry would give any new owner a monopoly on highly valuable information with no intention of allowing access to it; the public would lose their right to find out who owns the very land they live on; apart from the employment of some 4,000 people whose jobs may well be in jeopardy.

Many other major issues are running at the same time. For instance, the pension fund deficit in the steel Industry -- the workers are being short-changed.

We have the same Minister Sajid Jarvid dealing with both cases. Is he, along Jeremy Hunt, ready to be sacrificed to keep the Tory party in office?

NHS – bye bye?

The government is intent on privatising the NHS – a process helped by Labour with Private Finance Initiative (PFI) – and to run it as a business in the meantime. When a business wants to increase its profits, or its value to the market, it cuts staff, cuts pay and cuts working conditions. They employ lower qualified (hence lower paid) people than the job requires – and we can see this de-skilling in NHS Direct and the proposals for “physician's assistants” to do some of the work of doctors.

The business ideal is to pay workers nothing! Five years ago I met someone who was unemployed and claiming JobSeekers Allowance. He had been sent by DWP contractor A4E to work *unpaid* as a hospital porter at the Whittington for six months. He had no previous experience in the health services and was given no proper health & safety training. These ‘workfare’ schemes were set up under Labour's Flexible New Deal for the unemployed, and have been extended by successive governments.

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What with the massive deficit in the NHS, the Government is not doing too well at present. I am most surprised how over-tolerant the British public are.

One final comment to make about the In or Out of Europe issue. This is published just 23 days before voting on the referendum.

We may all reflect about the above comments on the Land Registry and the pension deficit in the steel Industry and that this country puts less GDP money into our NHS than many European countries, and that much of our electricity, gas and water is owned by companies from other nations. They have flogged off these valuable assets!

And so those who talk about sovereignty and looking after ourselves might consider -- do we own enough to go it alone?

PAT HAYNES

On Friday 20th May a Town Hall Memorial for Pat Haynes who died recently aged 84 saw a large turnout, Pat spent most of his adult life in politics and charity work.

A Councillor from 1971 up to 2011 and on the boards of countless charities, groups, also other affiliations, if ever a person deserved recognition for services to the public Pat certainly did, very many who knew Pat well at the memorial gave wonderful accolades to this formidable character, some very amusing anecdotes plus the twists and turns of our ex mayor and politician in our time.

Pat had a clear connection with Cripplegate Foundation, which enabled our Pensioners Forum to continue along with Liz McGowan and with Joe Harris from the NPC (National Pensioners Convention) Pat also wrote a book where he took us through the many interesting events during his long period of office, we could write a book about Pat Haynes.

My own observation with him as a councillor was amusing to say the least, he often appeared to be asleep in the Council chamber, and when least expected spring to life with an astonishing outburst, showing he was far from asleep, an amazing person, it was good to know you Pat you will be a great loss to this remarkable Islington Community.

George Durack

Sadiq Khan's letter, continued from page one/

I know **housing** is a massive issue for Londoners. We are currently facing a housing crisis after eight years of Tory misrule at City Hall. Many Londoners are struggling to afford their rent, and have little hope of ever owning their own home. I know many people are worried that their children and grandchildren will not be able to afford to live in the same area.

That's why I'm committed to building the genuinely affordable homes to rent and buy Londoners need. I'll demand half of all new homes built are genuinely affordable, and set up a not-for-profit lettings agency that will oversee longer, more stable tenancies and get rid of rip-off letting agent fees. I'll also ensure, through the Mayor's planning powers, that new homes are built to high standards, including that 10 per cent are wheelchair accessible. It's also important the next Mayor improves planning and design policies to offer older Londoners more choice, for active older Londoners, downsizers and those in need of specialist and extra care homes.

I'm fully committed to an **age-friendly London**. I have outlined in my manifesto the standards I'll expect from new homes, the protections I'll offer to our precious green space and parks, and how I'll declutter pavements to remove unnecessary street furniture which gets in the way of pedestrians. As someone suffering from asthma, I'm also committed to cleaning up London's filthy air by greening our bus fleet and extending the Ultra-Low Emission Zone to more areas.

The NPC is right to raise the issue of **living costs** for public sector workers. I'm alarmed that the rising cost of housing and transport are forcing many Londoners to move further and further out of the city, or leave altogether. The consequences of this for our health service, schools and police are worrying.

NHS -- bye bye? continued from page 2/

Another typical device for reducing staff costs is to employ fewer people to work longer hours – provided they don't have to be paid overtime. This is what we see in the case of the junior doctors, and nurses. They typically work for longer than their contracted hours. Proposed legislation would mean they can be asked to work up to 72 hours a week and that a shift from 7:30 pm to 3am would not count as a night shift. Nor does it prohibit debilitating shift patterns which alternate between day

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That's why I've committed to freeze fares for four years, and to focus energies on addressing the housing crisis by building the genuinely affordable homes Londoners need. I'll look to take control of surplus public land in the city, including that owned by the NHS, and reserve a proportion of new homes built on this land for those working in the health service.

You are right to flag the future of the **NHS**. Even though the Mayor does not have direct control, the Mayor has other powers which affect the future of the NHS. And I know how important the future of our health service is to Londoners. I owe the NHS everything. I was born in St George's Hospital in Tooting as were my two daughters. But I also know that under the Tories the NHS in London is in crisis – despite the magnificent efforts of doctors, nurses and other healthcare workers, waiting lists are getting longer, it's harder to see your GP and waiting times in A&E and for ambulances are increasing. And the funding gap for adult social care is not being plugged by the Tory Government.

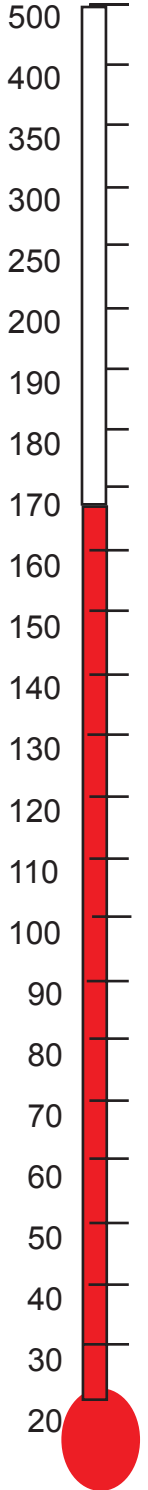
If elected, I will be a champion for the NHS, defending Londoners from the worst of the Government's failures and standing up to Tory cuts. I'll fight for greater support for GPs, A&Es and the ambulance service. In addition, I'll campaign for extra powers to coordinate health services across the city to provide proper strategic planning and ensure greater access for Londoners to crucial health services. I will work closely with the NHS and local authorities to improve public health in London, promote healthier lifestyles and tackle rising levels of illnesses and diseases.

I really value the opportunity to outline in more detail my policies for all Londoners. I'll continue campaigning hard up to Polling Day to win the trust of Londoners to be their next Mayor.

and night shifts every few days. Is this what we want for those who hold our life in their hands? This is not a dispute about pay but about working conditions, and behind it is a government intent on demolishing the national health service originally envisaged and replace it with a fragmented market system. If you have private health insurance you will have to go shopping – if you don't have insurance, too bad. So if you want to keep the NHS, you'll have to fight for it!

David Milner

WE DO NEED YOUR £5 ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION. SO THANKS TO ALL THOSE MEMBERS WHO HAVE PAID, AND SEE THE FORM ON BACK PAGE FOR THOSE WHO HAVEN'T.



BBC FACTS

blf you allow last year's shoddy backroom deal to go through, saddling the BBC with delivering the government's over-75s welfare policies to the tune of over £650m (SEE BOX BELOW), then you are agreeing to a 20% cut that will cripple the BBC and all who work for her. . . .

DON'T LET THEM DESTROY VALUE FOR MONEY

- The BBC Licence fee costs £145.50 a year or £0.40 per day for 9 TV channels 10 national radio stations, a network of local radio stations and an internationally acclaimed website.
- The top packages from Sky, Virgin Media and TalkTalk cost more than £1,000 a year.
- The BBC receives £3.7bn a year – Sky has an annual income of nearly double the BBC but produces a tiny proportion of original programming.
- BBC iPlayer was launched in 2007 and now receives over three billion programme catch-up requests a year.
- Every £1 of licence fee spent by the BBC, generates £2 of economic activity

STAND UP & BE PROUD OF WHAT AN ACHIEVEMENT THE BBC IS

- The BBC is free from shareholder pressure, advertiser influence and chasing ratings.
- If you disagree with the BBC, you can hold them to account because the BBC is yours.
- The BBC is watched and listened to by 96% of the UK population watching an average of 19 hours a week.
- The licence fee is the single biggest investment in the arts and creative industries in this country.
- Over £2 billion was injected into the creative industries by the BBC in 2014/15.
- It keeps orchestras alive and invests in the film industry.
- According to the Children's Media Foundation, the BBC is "the only player in town for commissioning content for kids".
- One in every 16 adults around the world relies on BBC News.

The above text is from a leaflet being distributed by the media trade union BECTU, which has members in the BBC and also has individual freelance members. We are reproducing it here because we consider that BBC FACTS should be made known to everyone.

BECTU quite rightly calls the government's decision to hand over to the BBC responsibility for the over 75s free TV licence a SHODDY DEAL. They are right! The minute it was included in the new BBC contract we knew this universal benefit would be in danger. It is a cynical move by government to outsource this benefit to an unelected body and then wash its hands of the consequences. In effect the chancellor is managing to privatise government cuts at the expense of Britain's older generation, and this benefit was introduced in the first place because the UK state pension was and remains amongst the least adequate in Europe. According to the Campaign to End Loneliness, 5 million older people consider the television to be their only source of company and one in 10 pensioners say they feel cut off from society, family and friends.

From 22nd June, 1-3 pm, we are having weekly lunches for Forum members at the IPF hall (1a Providence Court, Providence Place (next to the Cinema, opposite Islington Green). This is a way of getting to know each other, sharing ideas and doing what we can to prepare goods for our fund-raising Christmas Fair. We hope you will come along. Last year we made £500, and we think we can do even better.

FORUM DISCUSSES THE NHS AGAIN AT THE MAY MEETING

At our May meeting Ed Palmer and Francesca Silman updated us on the junior doctors' dispute with government.

- *An amended draft contract is being circulated for the junior doctors to vote on in July;*

- *A legal case is being considered calling for an injunction to be issued preventing the government from imposing a new contract.*

Important points were made by Pam Zinkin:

- Dr Aimles Singh had a 13-hour overnight shift with only half of the doctors comparing the same week in February 2015 and 2016.

- There were 18% more agency doctors this year than last and 49% more shifts unfilled.

- Because of the high cost of agency staff, the government imposed a cap on how much agency staff can be paid per shift. This saved the NHS £300 million since October 2015. But this makes it difficult to fill slots since they get half the pay they got last year.

The whole system is caught between the vision of better health and wellbeing and stronger NHS finance

The Health and Social Care Act is now being implemented and "every local and health care system in England is being asked to come together to create their own ambitious local plan for accelerating the implementation of the Five Year Forward View", (i.e. "the vision of better health and wellbeing, improved quality of care, and stronger NHS finance and efficiency"). There are 44 Sustainability and Transformation Plan footprints (areas) and generally speaking, three types of model,

- MCPs (multi-speciality community providers) concerned with moving specialist care out of hospitals and into the community;
- PACs (primary and acute care systems), with single-organisations providing hospital, GP and community services;
- Enhanced health in care homes

These models are meant to offer more joined-up care, health and rehabilitation services, and it is not just us who are having difficulties getting our heads around this!

The Audit Commission said: "It is difficult to identify the extent to which pooled funds and other joint financing arrangements have directly achieved better value for money or have made a tangible difference for service users. . . focus has tended to be on process rather than outcome."

- The Ministry of Health says 9,500 additional doctors are caring for patients since 2010. But this takes no account of the mix of skills and resources.

- Barking, Havering and Redbridge NHS Trusts' Chief Executives say there are significant future risks and they are appointing doctors' assistants and pharmacists to work in A&Es.

- In 2014 there was a gap of 5.9% between clinical staff needed and staff in post. A gap of 50,000.

- The government is going to make student nurses pay for training as if they were university students. This will also affect midwives, physios and occupational therapists.

- Meantime, student nurses work 12-hour shifts and because of the intensity of the course and placement they cannot get paid work. Student nurse Danielle Tiplady says:

"Cutting the bursary is an insult to student nurses dedication to our professions and our patients".

In fact the whole system is caught between the "vision of better health and wellbeing, improved quality of care" and "stronger NHS finance and efficiency", and all the deals include a requirement that local areas deliver financially sustainable health and social care systems by 2020.

Into the mix comes the so-called Manchester experiment: devolution. The King's Fund poses the question: "... what is the core objective of devolution in relation to health and care? Is it reducing health inequalities, delivering locally tailored, integrated care and improving population health? Or is it a way of achieving savings and reducing spending in the future?"

The point is made that the financial frameworks of the NHS and local government are very different, which creates confusion around what a devolved body is allowed to do or not to do. Local authorities must fix budgets that are balanced and sustainable, whereas the NHS continues to operate when in deficit.

However, all the models of health and social care integration are blighted by the cuts, privatisation, disintegration and de-centralisation through devolution; the current trend is to create a post-code lottery in which poorer areas with lower life expectancy and more long-term illness will not have the same quality of care as wealthier areas.

INFORMATION

Every Monday BINGO	1pm at IPF Hall, 1a Providence Court, Providence Place, N1 0RN
Thursday 16 June 10.30 a.m.	FORUM meeting in Committee Room 1, Islington Town Hall.
Saturday 18 June 1 p.m.	GARDEN PARTY, Highbury View Sheltered Tenants Association Entrance to garden in Ronalds Road, see map below.
Wednesday 22 June 1-3 pm	Lunch and get-together at IPF Hall, 1a Providence Court
Thursday 21 July 10.20 a.m.	Forum Annual General Meeting and 30th Anniversary, Islington Town Hall

We want to hear from you.

- Write to Islington Pensioners Forum, 1a Providence Court, Providence Place, N1 0RN
- Call us on: 020 7226 7687 Email us at: ipf@talktalkbusiness.net
- Office open from 10.30 a.m. -- 2.30 p.m., Tuesday to Thursday, but please call first.
- Sign up for our online newsletter on our website: www.islingtonpensionersforum.co.uk

Presidents:

Jeremy Corbyn MP & Lord Smith of Finsbury

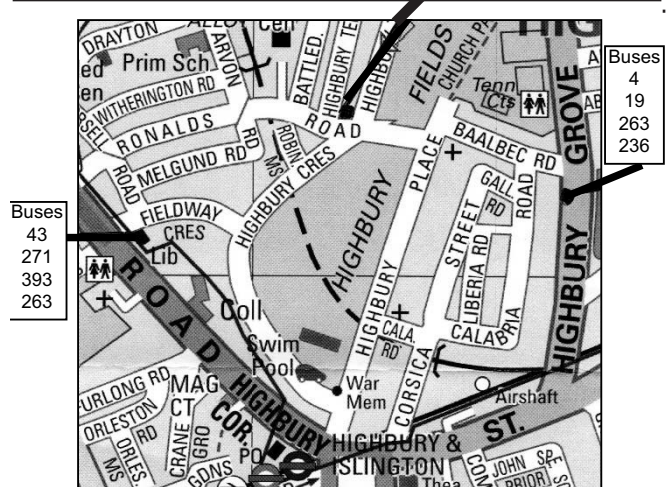
Chair: George Durack **Secretary:** Dot Gibson

Assistant Secretary: Annette Thomas

Treasurer: Eric Hill

Charity No: 1043081 Supported by Cripplegate Foundation & Islington Council

GARDEN GATE IN RONALDS ROAD FOR THE MAP AND BUS ROUTES FOR THE HIGHBURY VIEW GARDEN PARTY



Islington Pensioners Forum £5 annual subscription

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