

What to do?

- ✓ Sign The People's Charter. Website www.thepeoplescharter.org, or text CHARTER to 86006 (standard txt rate), or write to the Office address.
- ✓ Talk to family, friends and workmates about the Charter and get them involved.
- ✓ Get some copies of this leaflet to give to everyone you know.
- ✓ Write to your MP and local councillors supporting the Charter, ask their views, and tell them that you will use the Charter in deciding how to vote.
- ✓ Add comments supporting the Charter on-line to appropriate websites – particularly those of the news media
- ✓ Write to local and national newspapers, and take part in radio phone-ins promoting the Charter
- ✓ Contact your local People's Charter or anti-cuts group and get involved in this fast growing movement.
- ✓ Take copies of this leaflet to your local community organisations and trade unions to win their support.
- ✓ Set up a Charter local group to keep your neighbours informed and get them involved.

Britain was on its knees after WW2 when the people built the NHS and turned the great industries back to peacetime work – despite a “deficit” much larger than that now. Debt was dealt with through much fairer taxes and the drive to full employment – building hospitals, schools and new homes... boosting the economy.

As the PCS – the civil servants' union – points out, “From 1918 to 1961 the UK national debt was over 100% of GDP. During that period the government introduced the welfare state, the NHS, state pensions, comprehensive education, built millions of council houses, and nationalised a range of industries. The public sector grew and there was economic growth.”

Many politicians, media people and economic pundits say there is now no alternative to spending cuts and job losses, and we have to be scared of what the wealthy might do if we resist their “austerity measures”. It was not true at the end of WW2 and it is not true now. There is an alternative. Our economy could work for the people. We need the courage, determination and organisation to get the message out – and we need a real mass movement of people to do this. No-one will do this for us – the media are largely controlled by millionaires too. We need you, and people like you, to play your part.

The Charter shows the way. Please get involved.

**The
People's
Charter**

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The People's Charter

c/o London Civil Rights and Arts Centre

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**Sign
up**

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The People's Charter - How it Can Work

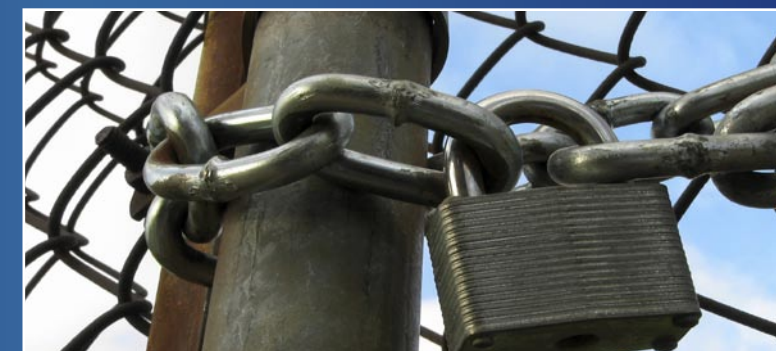
There is no need for unemployment or cuts to public services, pay, pensions or benefits. There is an alternative, meeting the needs of millions, rather than feeding the greed of millionaires.

Britain is still gripped by an economic and financial crisis. So is most of the world. Despite trillions of pounds being poured into the banks, the crisis continues. “The free market” results in recurring economic problems. When a crisis occurs, the government steps in to rescue banks and big business – saying we need them too much to let them fail. They nationalise the debt and keep the profits in private hands. That's how their market works.

Ordinary people are supposed to bail out big business and the banks. Now the Conservative led coalition is using bankers' debts and the failure of banks and business to pay their taxes to turn back all the gains that we have made over the last 60 years in public services, benefits, pay, pensions, rights at work, in any job security and the support to the most vulnerable. Some of our most vital services are to be turned over to big business as a way to make profit. People that can't afford to buy services will have to depend on family, charity and volunteers. This is Cameron's “Big Society”

The Conservative-LibDem Coalition – a government without a democratic mandate – has 18 millionaires in a Cabinet of 23. It has escalated the attack on every aspect of the lives of ordinary people – and instructs all local Councils to do the same.

Unemployment is rising. Despite attempts to hide it by massaging the statistics, even official figures put it at over 2.5 million. Leaked Treasury documents predict a further 600,000 public sector jobs and 700,000 private sector jobs will go over the next few years, devastating individual lives and communities and continuing in a spiral of decline. Youth unemployment stands at over 20% – a million young people – the worst hit being 16 and 17 year olds. This is the worst it's been since records began in 1992. Another generation is written off by those politicians and media moguls who tell us “we are all in this together”



As unemployment escalates, yet more workers are put on short time, and we all get a pay freeze – which inflation turns into years of pay cuts. But top company executives have had an average salary increase of 55% in the last two years, and these look set to continue. Meanwhile, the bankers' bonuses and golden handshakes are back to the tune of £7 billion, while the rest of us face pension cuts, and increases in retirement age.

VAT increases force up prices hitting the poorest hardest, while the wealthiest 10% of the population owe £120 billion of unpaid, avoided and evaded tax. This unpaid tax is set to grow in the coming year by up to £70 billion. The wealth gap widens, with the rich getting richer and the rest of us losing our savings and many losing our homes.

Cuts and growing unemployment will result in the same situation as Ireland. They make things worse.

There is an alternative, based on meeting the needs of the overwhelming majority of our population. This alternative is embodied in the 6 points of The People's Charter.

The Peoples Charter was set up by trade union leaders, MPs and leading campaigners in 2008. It is supported by the Trades Union Congress, and many community organisations. Here we spell out the alternative economy that the Charter stands for.



The People's Charter – How it Would Work



1. A fairer economy for a fairer Britain

- ✓ Target the £120 billion of unpaid, evaded and avoided tax by the super-rich
- ✓ Close corporate tax loopholes and tax havens, saving up to a further £70 billion per year
- ✓ Take the leading companies of the banking, insurance and mortgage industries – and their £90 billion of profits and bonuses fully into democratic public ownership to be run for the benefit of all. The people had to save them. Let us now make sure they are run for the good of all, helping to build a responsible future.
- ✓ Regain control of the Bank of England and keep interest rates low.
- ✓ Tightly regulate the City markets to facilitate lending and to stop speculation and takeovers against the public interest.
- ✓ Ban hedge funds, raids on pension funds, and asset-stripping
- ✓ Restructure the tax system so big business and the wealthy pay more and ordinary people pay less.
 - Levy a 2% wealth tax on the richest 10% of the population, raising £78 billion a year.
 - Introduce higher rates of income tax on earnings above £50,000, raising £5 billion a year
 - Increase Corporation Tax on business profits – particularly those made from overseas operations, raising £10 billion.
 - Gather a 20% “windfall tax” on the year's super-profits of banking, energy, retail, arms and drugs companies, raising £16 billion this year.
 - Impose a “Robin Hood” tax on financial transactions, raising £20 billion a year.
 - Reduce VAT to boost working people's spending power and provide economic stimulus.

Such taxation and economic policy – together with a policy for industry and jobs - will more than provide the resources for all the Charter policies.

Some say the rich would run away to other countries if such policies were implemented. But Ireland's “Don't tax the rich, don't regulate the market” policy led the Irish economy to catastrophe. Britain is an advanced country with great infrastructure and a huge number of people. Companies that build things or sell services will always want and need our business. German banks and companies do not run from Germany despite high taxes. They are expected to invest in future jobs and technology for their returns.

2. More and better jobs

- ✓ Introduce legislation to prevent closures and mass redundancies in profitable industries.
- ✓ Legislate to compel the re-investment of a percentage of profits in British industry
- ✓ Limit export of investment capital to stop asset stripping by transnational big business
- ✓ Take back into public ownership essential industries - energy, water, telecommunications and post, rail and bus transport - to put them and their profits to work for the British people
- ✓ Introduce Government support for other industries
- ✓ Target public and private investment to create new jobs - in particular in manufacturing, construction and green technology. Greater investment in renewable energy sources, ecological development and the recycling industries for domestic and industrial waste would lead to a new million green jobs.
- ✓ End job insecurity through casualised work and short term contracts without agreed reasons
- ✓ Reduce working hours – not pay - to create more jobs - and so more spending power - to stimulate the economy, increase tax revenue and reduce the number of people forced to live on benefit
- ✓ Guarantee high quality vocational training for young people to meet long term employment needs, as part of a government led job creation scheme
- ✓ Raise the minimum wage to two thirds national median earnings and end the lower rate for young workers, increasing spending power and stimulating the economy.

3. Decent homes for all.

- ✓ Offer ‘no interest’ loans to those threatened by housing repossession, stopping the evictions
- ✓ Control rents in the private sector
- ✓ End the threat of class cleansing and the gentrification of city centres for the wealthy
- ✓ New council housing and housing association homes should be brought back under the democratic control of Local Authorities – to meet the needs of people, not the property market.
- ✓ Introduce a comprehensive program to increase socially affordable housing, in recognition of the need for 3 million new homes - including:
 - An end to council house sales.
 - An end to housing stock transfers to private sector companies
 - Renewed investment in council house building and repairs
 - Councils to be given the right to purchase and refurbish long term empty properties for social use.
- ✓ Council tenants to be given assurance of housing security.

4. Protect and improve our public services – no cuts

- ✓ Bring energy, transport, water, post and telecommunications back into public ownership.
- ✓ End all fragmentation, competitive market models, PFI, privatisation and big business profiteering in public services
- ✓ **National Health Service**
 - Restore the integrated management of the NHS, under local democratic control.
 - Reinstate systematic, equitable distribution and use of health resources, rather than this being subject to the competition between local fund holders.
 - NHS to focus on direct employment of staff with proper pay and conditions agreements, rather than the employment of super exploited casual staff employed through profiteering agencies.
- ✓ **Education**
 - Restore the role of democratically elected and accountable Local Education Authorities in managing all publicly funded education in their area – from pre-school to Further Education - to deliver equality of opportunity.
 - Adequate Local Authority funding of central resources and services to schools and colleges, taking advantage of the economies of scale to reduce costs.
 - An end to the false economies of real terms cuts to pre-school provision and school budgets
 - An end to the Academies and Free School programs and the consequent costs of consultancies and education management businesses
 - A steady increase in the level of funding to schools for each school student in the state sector until it reaches that in the private sector
 - The re-establishment of the Education Maintenance Allowance to allow all post 16 students to continue in Further Education to reach their potential – thus improving the skills and knowledge base of the economy
 - The abolition of Higher Education student fees, and the reinstatement of the Student Grant – recognising that HE is not just for the individual but is essential to the future of the British economy, again improving the skills and knowledge base of the economy
 - Statutory funding for the youth service and adult/ community education to encourage social integration and cohesion, and avoid the costs of anti social behaviour and social isolation and community decay
- ✓ **Royal Mail**
 - Put the Royal Mail back in control of all postal services – get rid of the profiteers
 - End the post office closure program – meet community needs
 - End profit taking from postal services, and the consequent reduction in quality of service and increased costs
- ✓ **Local Government**
 - The renewal of local government based on greater planning and financial powers, the introduction of a local income tax and local control of the business rates
 - An end to the deliberately destructive and divisive distinctions between front-line and back-room jobs in local government public services

5. Fairness and Justice.

- ✓ **The wealth/poverty gap**
 - Use progressive taxation and other measures to close the currently increasing gap between the wealthiest 10% of the population – currently owning 80+% of the wealth – and the poorest 50% of the population – currently owning 2% of the wealth.
 - Reduce child and family poverty by increasing child benefits, tax credits and free publicly financed and provided nurseries, crèches and early years education
- ✓ **Pensions and pensioners**
 - Promote longevity and longer periods of retirement as an aim and success of an advanced society, rather than as an economic problem to be overcome
 - End all “work ‘til you drop” increases in the age of retirement
 - Increase social support for all those in retirement – including free heating and transport - and for those needing assistance in old age in their own homes and in community provision
 - Link state pensions and benefits to average earnings.
 - Protect existing pension scheme provision in both private and public sectors of employment – and seek improvements to reflect the best provision rather than reductions to reflect the worst provision
- ✓ **Fighting prejudice and discrimination**
 - Enforce equal pay and equal rights at work and in the community for women.
 - End racism in all its forms, and scapegoating of migrant workers and ethnic minority communities, or any form of discrimination against them.
 - End the “demonisation” of young people and invest in giving them a real stake in the future. Provide youth, community, arts and cultural centres, sports facilities, and clubs for all. Guarantee training & education with grants and no fees, and apprenticeships with decent pay.
 - Ensure all possible access to employment, social and leisure provision for all regardless of physical ability or impairment.
 - Respect and equality for people of various sexual orientation.
- ✓ **Trade Union rights**
 - Repeal the anti-union laws, and restore union rights to allow them the freedom to fight the crisis and to protect workers.
 - Compulsory and legally enforceable recognition of Trade Union organisation by all employers

6. Build a secure and sustainable future for all

- ✓ Prioritise action against man made climate change, and in defence of the environment, with policies of large scale investment for a greener, safer world now – and a million new green jobs.
- ✓ End the cost of war in lives, injury and billions of pounds. Bring our troops home. No more wars for control of natural resources. Sovereignty and independence for all nations.
- ✓ End the waste of billions of pounds on a new generation of nuclear weapons. Develop an alternative use of plant, jobs and skills for peaceful purposes through a program of Government led Research & Development
- ✓ Get rid of the debt economy in Britain and cancel the debts of the poor of the planet. Debt and economic insecurity are crushing the lives of millions of people, forcing large scale movements of working people round the world in search of work and economic security. It provides the context of economic collapse, war, famine and misery.