



Doorstep Guide: how to make the case for public ownership

Are you talking about public ownership on the doorstep? Here are the key arguments you'll need at your fingertips.

Privatisation has failed

Privatisation has failed for nearly 40 years. In the 1980s, Margaret Thatcher introduced the extreme ideology of insisting private companies do everything. From G4S letting us down at the Olympics to Serco lying about tagging prisoners, it's been a disaster. **We've been ripped off again and again**, quality has gone down, accountability has gone out of the window. Since then:

- **Rail fares have increased twice as fast as wages over the past 10 years.** Passengers suffer with overcrowding, delays and cancellations while paying up to 5 times more than our European neighbours as a percentage of wages.
- Our **water bills have risen by 40% in real terms** while English water companies have paid shareholders £56 billion, leaked away 20-25% of water and **polluted rivers and beaches with raw sewage**. All the investment in water infrastructure since 1989 could have been covered with our bills.
- Just **10.2% of the UK's energy comes from renewables**. Our privatised energy networks have made it difficult for communities to connect new wind and solar projects to the grid.
- Bus trips outside of London have halved since privatisation, and **fares have risen 71% from 2005-18**. 3,000 routes have been cut since 2010.
- **Royal Mail shareholders pocketed £800 million from 2013-17**. Before privatisation, Royal Mail profits went back into the treasury to be reinvested in other services, rather than into shareholders' pockets.
- **Since BT was privatised, £54 billion has been wasted on shareholder dividends** - enough to deliver full fibre broadband across the country twice over. Before privatisation, the UK was world leading in broadband development, but now just 8% of households have full-fibre connections.
- **£15 billion of the NHS budget has gone to private company contracts** in the past 5 years. Richard Branson sued the NHS when he didn't get the contracts he was hoping for. In one hospital, people have been charged up to £8,500 for medical procedures.

Public ownership would save billions

Privatisation wastes £13 billion a year (£250 million every single week) because it means **wasting money on shareholder profits**, fragmentation and a higher cost of borrowing in the private sector (government can borrow more cheaply.)



Public ownership of **rail** will save £1 billion a year – enough to buy **100 miles of new railway track**.



Public ownership of **water** will save £2.5 billion a year – investing this will **reduce leakage levels by a third**.



Public ownership of **energy networks** will save £3.7 billion a year – enough to buy **222 new offshore wind turbines**.



Public ownership of **buses** will save £506 million a year – enough to buy **1,356 new electric buses**.



Public ownership of **Royal Mail** will save £171 million a year – enough to open **342 new Crown Post Offices with postbanks**.



Public ownership of **broadband** will save £500 million a year – enough to pay for **full fibre broadband for 6 million households**.

(Delivering full fibre broadband is £12 billion cheaper overall in the public sector than with a mishmash of companies in the private sector.)



Ending the internal market in the **NHS** will save £4.5 billion – enough to pay for **72,000 nurses and 20,000 doctors**.

Public ownership works

There are hundreds of examples of successful public ownership - locally, nationally and around the world.

- Councils are already **insourcing** local public services from waste to social care. Over 3 out of 4 UK councils are planning to bring services back in house this year.
- **Nine councils run their own buses** across the UK - publicly owned companies like Reading Buses and Nottingham City Transport win awards every year.
- Councils are setting up **municipal energy companies** like Robin Hood Energy.
- The **NHS** was found to be the best healthcare system in the world in 2014 - scoring especially highly on quality and efficiency (despite being undermined by government cuts.)
- Publicly owned **Scottish Water** is the most trusted utility company in the UK.
- On our railway, the **East Coast line** fails in private hands and succeeds in public ownership - with 91% customer satisfaction.
- Other successful public owned organisations include **Channel 4, Ordnance Survey, the Land Registry, the Met Office and the Royal Mint.**
- The **post office in France** (La Poste) is publicly owned and has developed a range of innovative services including home visits for older people.
- The **railway in Switzerland** is publicly owned - and has been named the best train company in Europe.
- **Denmark has the highest proportion of wind power** in the world - its equivalent of the National Grid is publicly owned.
- **Water is publicly owned in Paris** - they've got lower bills and still and sparkling water fountains around the city #socialismwithasparkle!
- All over the world, **hundreds of cities** are taking water, energy and other public services into public hands!

Your strongest argument on the doorstep? The NHS!

Boris Johnson won't protect it from a US trade deal. Find out whether your election candidates have signed the pledge to protect the NHS from a trade deal by ending privatisation:

weownit.org.uk/nhs-trade-deal-action

Public ownership is popular

Most people - including Conservatives - think that public services should be run for the benefit of the whole community, not for a handful of shareholders. Polling clearly shows that public ownership is very popular.

84% want the **NHS** in public ownership

83% want **water** in public ownership

81% want **schools** in public ownership

77% want **energy** in public ownership

76% want **the railways** in public ownership

74% want **social care** in public ownership

70% want **parks** in public ownership

65% want **the Royal Mail** in public ownership

62% want **prisons** in public ownership

There's no real choice

The theory behind privatisation is that we can have markets in everything, giving us 'consumer choice'. The reality is that's just not true. For example, you can't choose where your water comes from, or which train company to travel with.

Tricky questions?

Find the answers at:

weownit.org.uk/FAQs

All references can be found at:

weownit.org.uk/top-five-arguments

