

LAMPAG AGM March 2015 Chairman's Report

Welcome to the LAMPAG AGM. I am pleased to announce that the LAMPAG membership has seen a steady growth which re-affirms our organisation as an active action group and consolidates our commitment to defend the welfare State and public services and to achieve dignity, respect, recognition and financial security in our later years. Our driving force has been and is to work with like-minded organisations in building a society based on equality, social justice and strong ethical values. We have clearly demonstrated this by our actions, activities, campaigns and our expressions of solidarity with workers, students and the wider community across the year.

In **April** we held a pre- election local election **Hustings** attended by representatives of the Green, Labour and Liberal parties. The Conservatives did not bother to send a representative. Members fielded a number of challenging questions to the representatives each of whom responded in the light of their party manifestos.

We joined workers in a **March and Rally** on **1 May** - International workers Day which celebrates the achievements of working people and the strengthening of the approach to the worldwide attacks on workers ' rights and standards of living. The day was dedicated to and paid tribute to Tony Benn and Bob Crow. Speaker after speaker condemned the Austerity measures and the attacks on workers' jobs, pay, pensions and working conditions internationally and in this country. There was a strong cry to organise and to mobilise for change.

LAMPAG was represented at the **Pensioners Parliament** in Blackpool in **June**. The Pensioners' Parliament is a meeting of pensioners nationally to debate a range of issues. This year they covered the NHS, pensions, the Freedom pass, the Ageing population and intergenerational action.

We also held a successful **Health Conference** at St Thomas' Hospital where the afternoon session was given over to the campaign '**Put Patients First**' organised by the Royal Society of General Practitioners.

LAMPAG joined the **Big Lambeth Health Debate** organised by Healthwatch Lambeth in **June** on how GP services could be transformed to improve health and quality, to reduce inequalities and to meet the challenges of an ageing population, a rise in long term health conditions and tighter budgets.

July saw LAMPAG at the **Lambeth Country Show** where we had a stall courtesy of Lambeth Trades Council. We spent the two days engaging with the public, highlighting pensioner issues and encouraging older people to join a similar pensioner action group in their boroughs.

In **September** we attended and contributed to the **Patient Transport Conference** at the Institute of Education where Transport for All launched the '**Sick of Waiting**' campaign for reliable, accessible patient transport for everyone who needs it.

Members attended **St Thomas' Hospital Trust AGM** in **September**. The presentations and reports focussed on improving nursing care in the hospital and in the community.

October was a busy month for LAMPAG. Our **Celebrating Age Event** in the Town Hall was preceded by a publicity stall on Windrush Square followed by the customary Lambeth Walk down the Brixton High Street which attracted a lot of attention.

We joined tens of thousands of trade unionists at the **TUC March and Rally** against Austerity'. Speakers at the rally called for the end to poverty pay, the rising cost of living and rising inequality. There was a call to build a movement to bring about real and lasting economic recovery win which everyone can share.

LAMPAG spoke at the launch of the **Energy Bill of Rights** in the House of Commons organised by Fuel Poverty Action which sets out the right to affordable, clean, safe energy, a fair pricing system, properly insulated and well repaired housing and energy run by the people for the people.

At the end of celebrating Age Month In October, we had a **stall** in Lambeth Town where we showcased our publications and work and invited people to sign the Dignity Code.

In November members of LAMPAG attended the **Croydon Assembly** meeting' **Fighting Inequality**'. The chairman was facilitator in the 'Pensions and Welfare Benefits' workshop.

LAMPAG joined pensioners at the **NPC Lobby of Parliament** in November where representatives from the three main Westminster parties addressed a packed meeting and outlined some of the policies likely to feature at the general elections in May.

At the end of January we celebrated **Dignity Action Day** (1 February) with a stall in Brixton where we spread the word about the importance of Dignity in care and the need for hospitals, care homes local authorities and service providers to adopt the NPC Dignity Code which sets out clearly and concisely how we should treat those who can no longer look after themselves.

LAMPAG attended a meeting of **Southwark and Lambeth Integrated Care Citizen's Forum** in **February** Discussions included creating integrated services, focussing on delivering outcomes and working with all service providers.

In **February** LAMPAG joined demonstrators outside Lambeth Town Hall where the **full Council** met to agree a budget of £90m cuts of services over the next three years. We added our voice to the vociferous condemnation of cuts which will affect children's, youth, older people's services and the closure of two libraries.

Thank you to the outgoing committee for your commitment, support and guidance when needed. Thank you members for your support, fortitude, generosity and principled stand to uphold pensioners' rights.

Ellen Lebethe.