

APRIL NEWSLETTER

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LAMPAG OPEN MEETING

MONDAY 15 April 2019

Lambeth Town Hall
Brixton Hill, SW2 1RW
Room TH1-16
12.00 pm to 2.30 pm

LAMBETH EQUALITY COMMISSION

Speaker: Cllr Winifred Cabinet Member for Culture and Equalities

Lambeth is one of the most deprived areas in the country. It is the 8th most deprived borough in the country and the 22nd most deprived in the communities. Some of the communities suffer great levels of poverty and inequality and face barriers that prevent them from reaching their potential. In 2017 Lib Peck, then leader of Lambeth Council set up Lambeth Equality Commission. Their task was to identify the barriers which stand in the way of equality of many especially the most marginalised and then to work at breaking them down.

This is your opportunity to come and be part of the debate on **who** the members of the Commission are, **how** they were identified, of **how** the Commission collected evidence of the **extent** of inequality and unfairness in the borough, **what** strategies, projects, programmes have been put in place to tackle these. Furthermore, we would like to know about **the outcomes** so far, **what more** needs to be done and differently if need be, **by whom** and **how**.

Of special interest to us as pensioners who experience extremes of pensioner and fuel poverty resulting in unnecessary cold related deaths, whose social care needs are often not met, who have problems with inadequate and suitable housing, who experience loneliness and social isolation as a result of cuts to essential older people's services and to universal benefits which in turn affect their health and wellbeing, we need to know what actions the Equality Commission has taken and plan to take to combat inequality and unfairness across the Lambeth older community.

We are also keen to learn about the Cabinet member's work with organisations in the borough's arts and cultural communities as well as her oversight of sports and leisure.

Tea .coffee, biscuits, raffle.

LAMPAG AGM

LAMPAG held its **40th AGM** where we elected a full committee of officers and committee members. The committee looks forward to working as a team to deliver the LAMPAG aims and objectives and to challenging the inequalities that blight our lives. With the support of the membership we hope to strengthen our resolve and actions to bring about to reach our goals. We need to build our organisation, by widening our group's diversity and empowering the membership to develop the kinds of strategies and actions that will bring about real change. We owe it to ourselves and the future generations.

A proposal the £10 **subscription** should be paid in one go was passed unanimously. It was argued that the old system of paying it in two halves did not work and had made the job of the membership secretary more difficult. Please note that the subscription is due now for 2019/2020.

1 MAY MAY DAY RALLY

May Day is a celebration of International Workers' achievements. The day celebrates what workers have won by their campaigning actions for workers' rights like a living wage, an end to zero hours contracts, the right to exercise the right to shrike over unfair practices and safe and decent working conditions. Workers have campaigned vociferously and strongly against the rich and powerful and for the unity of the young and old and men and women equally. The call is for Trade Union rights, equality, social justice and international solidarity all now under threat because of the Austerity agenda and Brexit. As retired workers ourselves, LAMPAG will be joining workers at the May Day rally in solidarity with the workers.

Assemble on Clerkenwell Green at 12 noon. for march to Trafalgar Square at 1pm. Alternatively meet on the steps of Lambeth Town Hall at 11 am for departure to Clerkenwell as a group at 11.30 am. If you unable to do the march, come to Trafalgar Square but try to be there. Look out for the NPC or the LAMPAG banner.

BREXIT AND OLDER PEOPLE

Since the Referendum in June 2016, there has been a stream of parliamentary debates, discussions and votes to the exclusion of the real issues which affect communities across the country. Theresa May's withdrawal deal has been rejected three times by large margins and at the time of writing we still do not know the end product. There are a number of specific issues directly affecting pensioners.

The state pension is uprated for British recipients in European Economic Area countries or where there is a reciprocal social security agreement. Until the UK formally leaves the EU the existing social security rules therefore continue to apply and entitlements remain unchanged. However, it is important to note that this is not yet part of the final agreement putting pensions rights and the triple lock in danger as a result. There are concerns around **health and care** regarding the uncertainty amongst the workforce. Over 60,000 people from EU countries outside the UK work in the NHS in England and around 90,000 in adult social care. There is no doubt the UK's health and social care sectors rely on overseas workers so it is important that the employment and residency rights of these people are not undermined during and after Brexit. Data from the Nursing and Midwifery Council has shown a substantial reduction in the number of applicants to the nursing register from EU nationals since the referendum. There is a danger that in the current form of the withdrawal bill, **the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights** will not apply in Britain post withdrawal. This has implications for UK anti-discrimination law. Under EU rules **VAT** has to be added to **energy bills**, at present 5% following the NPC campaign. However, under a new arrangement, this requirement would no longer apply. This despite the recent increases in energy prices. Should a **hard border** between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland happen, this will put travel across the two countries at risk. There are also indirect consequences of Brexit which affect us all, like the impact on the economy and reduced trade, businesses relocating to Europe or shutting resulting in job losses and insecurity, concerns about drugs and food shortages, and European Health Insurance. For now there is a sense of genuine powerlessness

Committee Meeting: Monday 29th April at 11am Lambeth Town Hall.

