

LAMPAG AGM MARCH 2016 Chairman's report.

Welcome to the LAMPAG Chairman's report. This has been a challenging year for communities which have been feeling the impact of national policies and local authority cuts on their services across the borough. The onslaughts on our services and their impact on our services have increased our determination to mobilise and to strengthen our resolve to achieve our goal of dignity, respect and financial security in our later years. We have seen a steady increase in our membership which reaffirms LAMPAG as an action group campaigning for real change to the lives of older people. Our driving force has been and is our alignment and work with likeminded groups to build a society based on social justice and equality.

April. We held a pre local election **Hustings** which was attended by prospective candidates from the Conservative, Green, Liberal and Labour Parties. Participants fielded a wide range of pertinent and incisive questions to the candidates and each answered them sticking closely to their party manifestos.

May. On 1 May on **International Workers Day**, we joined workers in a march from Lincoln's Inn Fields to a rally on Trafalgar Square. The rally was greeted by Jeremy Corbyn, the newly elect leader of the labour party, who gave a rousing speech condemning the government's attacks on workers' rights, their privatisation agenda, their plans to dismantle the Welfare State and Public Services and the need for a new kind of politics based on social justice and fairness. Speaker after speaker condemned the government's Austerity measures and its impact on communities across the country. The call was to organise and mobilise against Austerity.

June. LAMPAG was represented at the **Pensioners Parliament** in Blackpool in which was described as 'one of the best for a long time'. There were many excellent speakers. on a wide range of issues. These included NHS, Pensions, Social Care, Dementia, Money Matters, Tackling Digital Exclusion and Transport. The conference was well received.

We were on the march again on the **National Demonstration 'End Austerity Now'**. There was a massive turnout on the march and it was pleasing to see so many younger people involved in what was only the beginning of the fight back against Austerity.

We held a successful **Health Conference** in the Governor's Hall, at St Thomas' Hospital. The conference was opened by Sir Hugh Taylor, Chairman, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust. The Trust Panel reported on policies, initiatives, new builds and practices to improve patient and staff care at the hospital. Dr Thomas delivered a presentation on Diabetes and Dr Toby Garoon talked about Joint Health Care. Both sessions were followed by questions covering a wide range of medical and related personal issues. The afternoon session covered Hospital Charge led by Dr Jane Hardiman-Smith, Health Care Policy Advisor, and Civil Service Pensioners Alliance.

September. In response to the impact the Local Authority's cuts to social care and community services and the threats of more cuts to come over the next 3 years, LAMPAG proposed a meeting of representatives of affected older people's and community groups / organisations to address the impact of the cuts on their services, to identify matters of concern as a result and the idea of forming a united voice against the cuts and of acting to meet the challenges.

October. This was a month of **Celebrating Age and Black History**. We celebrated the achievements older people to the economy, society, their communities, families and as members of the Black Community to world. We had a social event where we shared food, drinks friendship and warmth in our customary way. We welcomed the guest speaker, Victoria Northridge, Collections Manager, the Lambeth Archives. Members of LAMPAG celebrated **Silver Sunday** at City Hall with pensioners from across London with a range of activities including

music, dance, poetry, drama. The event was opened by the Mayor of Westminster City, Councillor the Lady Christabel Flight and was enjoyed by all.

November. Members joined the **Lobby of Parliament**. Speakers included Kelvin Hopkins MP, Nick Thomas-Symonds, Shadow Pensions Minister, Jan Shortt. NPC Health and Social Care Working Party, Reena Radis, National Association Care Catering, Mark Serwotka, Secretary PCS, Secretary, CWU and Dot Gibson, General Secretary NPC.

Fuel Poverty Action and LAMPAG held a **'warm up'** in the Houses of Commons on the Day the government was due to announce the number of people who had died from cold related illnesses. The aim was to draw attention to fuel poverty and to the scandal of cold related deaths. The group met Caroline Lucas and raised the issues around the effects of Fuel Poverty on communities.

This action was followed by a **balloons releasing event** on St James's Square where the NPC released black balloons representing the 43, 000 people who had succumbed to cold related illnesses.

Following that we **met MP Kate Hoey** at Portcullis House and raised the issues of pensioner poverty, the social care crisis, the privatisation of the NHS. November also saw us on a March from Windrush Square to Lambeth Tate Library to protest against the Local Authority's plans to close some libraries and to convert others into libraries/ gyms. It is also the month when we held a **Fundraising fayre** at Stockwell Resource Centre.

January. Members joined hundreds of protesters on a **'Kill the Bill' March** from the Imperial War Museum to Downing Street to protest against the Housing Bill which will condemn millions more to a lifetime of insecure private renting and will see the demolition of estates and more speculation driving up rents and house prices.

We held a successful **Open Meeting** at The Waterloo Action Centre organised by **Lambeth Older People's Alliance**. Speakers included John McDonnell MP and Dot Gibson. NPC General Secretary. The meeting highlighted a number of issues - the impact of LA Cuts, safeguarding people with mental health problems, the media, TTIP, Housing, and Library closures, Fuel Poverty and Heating. This meeting will be followed up by further meetings and actions to rebuff the challenges

February. We celebrated Dignity Action Day jointly with St Thomas' Dignity Champions at St Thomas' Hospital. We had a stall where we leafleted members of the public and staff with information on Dignity Action Day and of the importance of ensuring the treatment of older people whether in hospital, a nursing home or their own home with dignity. The public signed the petition to that effect.

March. We were on the march again with **Save Our Libraries Campaign** from Windrush Square to Tate Lambeth to protest against the closure of the library on 1 April and of its conversion into a library / gym. It transpired that the Library has had a temporary reprieve. However, the campaign will continue to save **all** our libraries
I would like to thank the committee for their commitment, support and guidance. Thank you members for your loyalty, fortitude, generosity and principled stand to uphold pensioners' rights

Ellen Lebethe.

