



Lambeth Pensioners Action Group

## Newsletter November 2025

### Hurricane Melissa

Readers will no doubt be aware that this hurricane has caused terrible damage and loss of life in the Caribbean. **Jamaica, Haiti and Dominican Republic are the worst hit countries but Cuba has also been affected.** They need cash and will no doubt be grateful for all donations, however small.

The Red Cross is giving help and **donations can be made through the British Red Cross Society Emergency Fund.** Details are at

<https://tinyurl.com/zepmux73> If you are a UK tax payer, you can tick a box to claim Gift Aid, which will add 25% to your donation.

Alternatively, if you would like to donate specifically to help Jamaica you can do so on a Jamaican Government website <https://supportjamaica.gov.jm/donate> but this does not qualify for Gift Aid.

**A further possible way to help is by giving things.** Lambeth Council will open the Assembly Hall attached to the Town Hall on Sunday November 16<sup>th</sup> from 10am to 7pm to accept these donations, which will then be shipped to Jamaica. Items most needed include clothes, shoes, personal hygiene products, baby essentials, formula, non-perishable food, and disposable nappies.

### Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November from noon to 2.30pm in Room 1 on the Ground Floor of Lambeth Town Hall.

**Jocelyn Cruywagen will be speaking about the work being done by South London Stand Up to Racism.** We can expect to hear some excellent ideas for ways in which LAMPAG and its members can combat the racism which seems to be getting worse by the minute.

There will be the usual tea, coffee and biscuits. Please bring prizes for the raffle.

**Ellen should be joining us.** She has progressed from using a walking frame to using crutches.

**Our new recruiting leaflet** will be available in the meeting. In advance of the meeting, please think of places you visit that might display some.



Two photographs in advance of Jocelyn's talk. Above, Nigel Farage shows us once again that he is a "man of the people", despite being educated at Dulwich College and a career as a stock broker. To the right is Enoch "Rivers of Blood" Powell, whom Farage has said is his political hero.



## World Toilet Day

This is not a joke. November 19<sup>th</sup> is World Toilet Day coordinated by the United Nations. It highlights the global sanitation crisis and advocates for safely managed sanitation for all.

More parochially, the British Toilet Association champions access to public toilets. They are currently running a survey of how the lack of public toilets affects people. It is at <https://tinyurl.com/2867jekh>

As it is only online the results of the survey will inevitably fail to reflect fully the experiences of older people, many of whom are not online but frequently need the toilet. But even so it should still be worth completing in the hope that it will be useful in encouraging better provision.

# How the Poor subsidise the Rich

There are numerous ways in which the Poor Subsidise the Rich. One example is taxing residential property. This used to be done by levying Rates, which were more or less in proportion to property values. Then a government led by Margaret Thatcher replaced Rates with a Poll tax levied in the same amount whatever the value of the property. This was too much for many people and led to her downfall. The Poll tax was replaced by the Council tax which we have now.

**Most people seem to think that Council tax is levied in proportion to property values, but that is not quite true.** It is half way between Rates and the Poll tax. Properties are divided into bands according to value in 1991. To bring the values more or less up to date, I will multiply them by seven. The band with the most properties in it, D, contains properties with an average value of £550,000 and the Council tax is £1950. Band A contains the lowest value properties, with a maximum value of £280,000. If tax were levied in proportion to the Band D average, the tax payable would have been £990 but the actual amount levied is £1300. Thus, **the people in the cheapest properties are being overcharged by more than £300 a year.**

The highest value band, G, contains properties with a minimum value of £2,250,000. If the tax on these was levied in proportion to the Band D average value it would be £8,000 or more. In fact, it is £3,900. Thus, **the people in the most expensive properties are being undercharged by £4,000 or more a year.**

This very unfair arrangement has been going on since the introduction of Council tax in 1993. Over this period, we have had Labour governments, Conservative governments and a Conservative & Liberal Democrat coalition government. But the situation has not been changed. National Insurance is similarly unfair. High earners would be paying in half as much again as they pay now if life expectancy were taken into account.

**As soon as one starts thinking about this, the examples of it become legion.** The top rate of income tax is sacrosanct and cannot possibly be increased above 40%, even when the threshold for paying income tax is kept so low that even the destitute are paying tax out of their meagre wages. And it goes on. Why is VAT levied on so many essentials? How can gas and electricity standing charges be justified when the effect is to make those who watch the pennies pay proportionately more than those of us who are happily extravagant?

**The resulting obvious question is How on Earth do the Rich get away with it?**

# Coming Attractions

At our December meeting we hope to have a speaker from the Health & Social Care Working Party of the National Pensioners Convention on the crisis in social care and care at home in particular.

The speaker in January is likely to be from Refugee Action.

We are currently trying to arrange to meet our Members of Parliament in February.

Ellen is hoping to arrange some event with young people but she has been unable to pursue this while she was laid up.

If there is a topic you would like a talk on or a campaign you think LAMPAG could usefully take part in, please let the Chair or one of the Secretaries know.

Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Stand Up to Racism, Jewish Voice for Liberation and other antiracist organisations are planning to have a huge national march in March. This will probably be on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> preceded by local events on the 21<sup>st</sup>, which is the UN Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The UN chose this date because it is the anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre. Please pencil both dates into your diary.

A date for our next stall outside Iceland will be fixed as soon as possible. It is unlikely to be before the New Year.

## The Officers of LAMPAG are

Chair: Ellen Lebeth 020 7582 5063 [elebethe@talktalk.net](mailto:elebethe@talktalk.net)

Secretaries: Hilary Rock-Gormley [hilaryrockgormley@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hilaryrockgormley@yahoo.co.uk)

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Treasurer: Jennie Hall 020 8671 8752 [jenniekh@hotmail.com](mailto:jenniekh@hotmail.com)

Gloria Cameron is very helpful in taking on various tasks. Also, Maude Estwick and Mr Dada are committee members. **But we really could do with more help with, for example, writing and getting out the newsletter or booking speakers.**

**LAMPAG is affiliated to the  
National Pensioners Convention**