



Lambeth Pensioners Action Group

Newsletter April 2025

Our next open meeting is on Monday 28th April from noon to 2.30pm, when our guest speaker will be Councillor Issa Issa. He is Lambeth's Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing.

We will be in the Town Hall. Ask Reception for the room. We will have the usual refreshments and a raffle.

Housing Matters

Home is where the heart is, so the saying goes, but home is more than bricks and mortar. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights acknowledges that housing is a fundamental right, but the right is not enshrined in UK law. However, housing is a right not a commodity. It is a right to dignity, protection, safety and wellbeing. Sadly, this is not true for some poor, disadvantaged, disabled and vulnerable members of the Lambeth community.

By its own admission, Lambeth is facing a significant housing crisis. Amongst others it faces issues of long waiting lists for housing, lack of affordable homes, homelessness, the number of empty homes, the cost of temporary accommodation and the paucity of funding to deal with these matters. Please see overleaf for Lambeth's Housing Strategy.

Do make every effort to attend this important meeting as housing concerns us all in one way or another. You have an opportunity to talk about your experiences of housing in Lambeth and what you think needs to change.

Ellen Lebethe

Libraries in danger!

You may not know about this. In fact, Lambeth council has kept it pretty secret. But every LAMPAG member needs to know - the council is making a huge cut of £1million to the libraries' annual budget. As the budget is just £4.5m, it's a slash of nearly a quarter and so sure to be very damaging.

The council sneaked the news into its papers for the Cabinet meeting on 24 February. You would need a microscope to find it among over 700 pages of Cabinet waffle. Worst of all, it came out of the blue. The library service knew nothing about it and certainly was not consulted. Councillors had never discussed it, nor had the Cabinet. All the same, it was rapidly voted through, and it is now official policy!

LAMPAG members know how important libraries are to every age group, whether it's for books and newspapers, internet access, a precious resource for young families, free groups and activities, the home delivery service or just a place to go. The council promises that the service won't be affected at all. What nonsense! It has yet to explain how this miracle can happen. Highly paid Lambeth Directors (none of whom has experience of running libraries) are now trying to work it out. Things have gone rather quiet...

Meanwhile, we need to act! The cut is still a big secret. Please tell everyone you know what is happening - especially family, and people you meet at the library. Contact your councillors and just ask them what is going on. Sign the petition here: <https://chnq.it/xrWZ2hXYRW> Once we know what the plans really are, we can fight them. LAMPAG will be fully involved. Watch this space!

Laura Swaffield

Lambeth Council's Housing Strategy 2024

This sets out the Council's vision "For residents to have access to and benefit from safe, secure and high-quality homes which are affordable and which provide stability, sanctuary, and the best conditions to grow up and age. To deliver this vision the council has identified three priority themes to guide them over the next six years:

Priority One - Lambeth will lead the way in providing more genuinely affordable homes for residents making best use of resources, levers and opportunities to innovate.

Priority Two - Lambeth will put residents first, providing services which value and meet the needs of residents –and rectify things if they go wrong.

Priority Three - Lambeth Housing will be at the centre of safe and sustainable places, which support physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Annual General Meeting

Thank you to everyone who attended the AGM on 17 March. A special thank you to members of the committee who continue to move our agenda forward and a warm welcome to the new members of the committee who committed themselves to carrying out the work of the organisation. In the present political climate, this has become an onerous task. Pensioner numbers are on the decline across pensioners' group and more and more have several other commitments. So it is with relief that we have a working committee at present. Notwithstanding, we still need to co-opt a Vice Chair and other new committee members to solidify our work.

The committee elected at the AGM consists of Ellen Lebethe as Chair, Hilary Rock-Gormley and Stephen Carlill as joint secretaries, Jennie Hall as Treasurer and the following as committee members: Mr Dada, Gloria Cameron, Maude Estwick and Laura Swaffield.

Ellen

2024 Accounts

Further to Jennie's report on our finances at the AGM, the accounts for last year have now been signed off and will be available at the meeting. The income was £1,000, made up of members' subscriptions of £495, raffle takings of £278 and donations of £227.

We spent £881.68, made up as follows:

Newsletter printing and postage	£333.26
Divatones Choir for 2 performances	240.00
Refreshments	117.65
Liability insurance	100.80
Postage stamps	35.70
Stationery	29.27
Subscription to NPC Greater London Region	25.00
	<u>£881.68</u>

The income was therefore £118.32 more than the expenditure. We had £1,058.06 in hand at the beginning of 2024. Adding the £118.32, meant we had a healthy £1176.38 at the end of the year.

If you have not already done so, **please pay your 2025 membership subscription of £10 at the next meeting.**

www.lampag.org

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LAMPAG is affiliated to the National Pensioners Convention