



Charity No: 10453081

ISLINGTON PENSIONERS FORUM

The voice of Islington's older community

July 2015 Newsletter

Friends:

Every member and

supporter is valued by us, and just in case there is any misunderstanding. . . . the Forum decided to start an annual subscription of £5 (see page 3). However, those who cannot afford this and/or are unable to join us in meetings and activities, but want to continue to be included on our supporters' list, are not expected to pay.

And a good time was had by all

As we were getting off the train in Blackpool the news came in that our President, Jeremy Corbyn MP had enough nominations to stand for the leadership of the Labour Party, and so we didn't waste time drinking his health!

The following morning, with our banner, we took part in the short march from Blackpool Tower to the Winter Gardens where the Mayor of Blackpool, Councillor Peter Callow officially opened the three-day event, followed by speakers: Natalie Bennett (Green Party leader), Paul Nowak (TUC Assistant General Secretary), Dr. Brenda Boardman (Environmental Change Institute), David Honeybone (Care UK striker), Carla Cantone (Italian CGIL union retired members secretary) and Dot Gibson (NPC general secretary).

The subjects for the six seminars (three in the morning and three in the afternoon) on the second day

were: *the NHS and privatisation, Exploring the pension landscape, Tackling digital Exclusion, Social Care and the challenge of dementia, Making Transport Accessible and Money Matters*. Everybody took their own decision about which two they attended.

There were also three lunchtime



"Good health" to Jeremy!

meetings for anyone interested: *Dementia Friends, Housing choices for older women, Hospital discharge – good, bad or indifferent?*

But it wasn't all work and no play! There was time to look around Blackpool and some joined other pensioners for a lively night out on

the Tuesday at the British Legion with music and entertainment. Also we had a great time at the social on Wednesday evening in the Empress Ballroom. We went onto the dancefloor – you can use your imagination as to whether we actually danced, but we certainly did a bit of moving and shaking more or less in time to the music!

The question for discussion on the Thursday was: *What do the next five years of austerity hold?* To open the discussion with Dot Gibson were Dave Ward (General Secretary of the Communication Workers Union) and Professor Christina Beatty (Sheffield Hallam University).

And to round everything off, Rosie Macgregor led the singing of *Keep Right On To The End Of The Road*.

This is a tradition started by Jack Jones the founder and first President of the National Pensioners Convention.

Pensioners' Parliament in Blackpool 16-18 June 2015

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

The rapid activity over the last few weeks was difficult to keep up with, resulting in my own late decision to attend the National Pensioners Convention Parliament in Blackpool. Fortunately, Bob Collins agreed to chair our own Pensioners Forum, where I understand that our booked speaker, Cllr James Murray, had to cancel. The Forum none the less had an interesting debate, thanks to Bob.

I am writing this on Sunday, the day after the Union-backed People's Assembly march - attended by a massive number of people, with their banners - against the government austerity programme. Our banner was displayed alongside the NPC banner opposite Downing Street, where we watched an amazing flow of people march past for three hours. This should at least enliven the doubters as to what the austerity means to our people.

I know that meeting after meeting, and marches, are in general ignored by government. There is now a sense of much more anger building up, that could again turn nasty. The government will ignore this protest "at their peril".

Turning to something pleasant -- recently, our MP

Jeremy Corbyn, who is also the Forum's Hon. President, put forward his name for the leadership of the Labour Party. He surprised many by getting the 35 nominations required, and did well in a televised Hustings on Wednesday. At last we have someone capable of taking the political debate in a direction,

not only of change, but from one in which so many good people are disregarded, where the political leadership lays emphasis upon "the hardworking people" as though the disabled, the poor, the unemployed and many pensioners are no longer part of this society.

Should we be surprised when less than 25% of the voters voted for the present government, despite all the arguments about democracy? This

is no mandate to rule our country; little wonder at the discontent. The forthcoming direction does not look good for those trying to make ends meet. Jeremy is capable of moving people in a more egalitarian direction. I do hope that Jeremy becomes leader of the Labour Party. Many of us have known him over a long period. I did have a small whisky at Blackpool in celebration of the 35 nominations. I promise to double that consumption should he win!



"Our banner was displayed opposite Downing Street, where we watched an amazing flow of people march past for 3 hours"



Our first chance to congratulate Arsenal Football Team in print!



The Mayor, Councillor Richard Greening with Arsen Wenger and the “dream team” on the Town Hall steps during their open-top bus tour on 31st May following their 12th FA Cup Victory.

Celebrating Age!

Islington Pensioners Forum

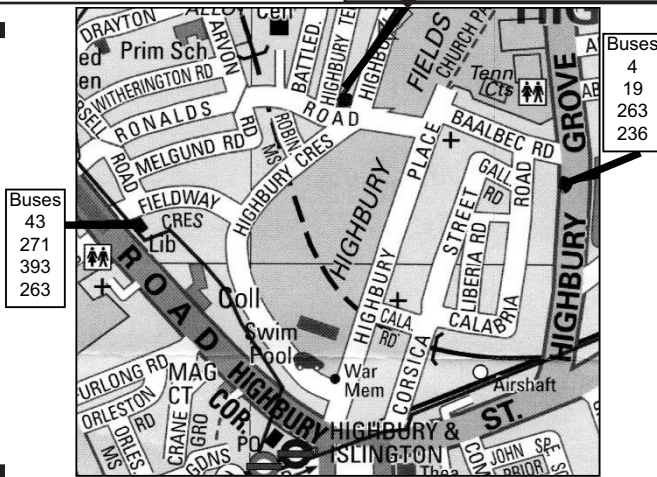
SUMMER GARDEN PARTY

Saturday 11th July from 1 pm

HIGHBURY VIEW

Entrance: Garden Gate, 87-89 Ronalds Road, N5 1XQ

come along and bring your friends and family, enjoy food, drink, music and relax in this lovely garden



A couple of hiccups but a good discussion!

The June Forum meeting suffered a couple of hiccups. . . our speaker had to cancel at short notice and George, our chair, was absent, attending the NPC Annual Parliament.

Bob Collins admirably took the Chair. He decided to give those present the chance to do what the most enjoy - have a good discussion on the ways of the world.

We began with a suggestion: that we congratulate our President, Jeremy Corbyn, on being nominated as a candidate for Leader of the Labour Party. This was greeted with much approval and was followed by a lengthy discussion on what was wanted from a future Labour Government.

A number of other concerns were discussed, in particular the Government decision to sell all social housing and the appalling consequences. Our thanks to Bob for helping to create a really interesting couple of hours.

ISLINGTON PENSIONERS FORUM

1a Providence Court, Providence Place,
N1 0RN
Tel: 020 7226 7687
Email: ipf@talktalkbusiness.net

Membership £5 a year

CAMPAIGNING FOR

- a living state pension
- free social care
- continuation of the freedom pass

BUILD IPF!

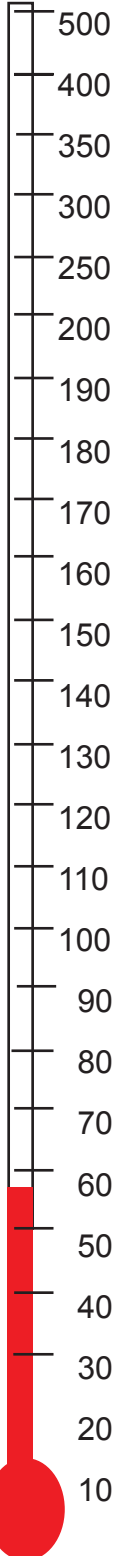
Islington Pensioners Forum has a fine record of standing up for pensions, health and care and the right to our “freedom pass”. We are also campaigning for future generations, so it’s even more important that we keep going!

Less than six months ago we reluctantly decided we had to start an annual £5 subscription because of the rising cost of production and postage of our Newsletter and general office costs etc.

We knew this would take time to build up. So we thought that together we could keep a tally each month with this “thermometer” to follow our progress.

The £5 is less than 50p a month and it can be paid at the monthly Forum meeting in cash or cheque (pay-able to “Islington Pensioners Forum”, posted to the address on the back page of this Newsletter or by Standing Order (form on back page).

From July members will get the above membership card.



Who owns the land?

*An idea from a poem by Fran Landesman,
called The Ballad of David Geffen*



One day as I approached the wood
From across the fields, as I always could,
The land was sold and the owner new
Had put up a notice that said "Hey, You!
This wood is private,
So keep well away
And don't try to sneak in another way".

From the Sussex Down
To Ben Nevis Tor,
From the Cumberland Way
To the Devon Moor,
I had rambled the land,
Always open to me,
So I pondered this warning,
Could it possibly be?

As Heathrow wants more planes to land.
It needs the runways to expand.
It keeps protesters from its ground
And seemingly from miles around.
It asks the law its view to see
'Gainst the WI and the RSPB,
Who only seek to save the space
For the birds and bees
And the human race.

So the rich can buy and environments change
As they put up fences
To restrict right to range.
Now even some parts
Of our rivers aren't free.
Is it possible they'll soon start
Enclosing the sea?

Val Dunmow

Some of us saw the play by Carol Churchill at the National Theatre: "Light Shining in Buckinghamshire" on its last night, 22 June.

In the "Putney Debates" of 1647 the Levellers presented "An Agreement of the People" against Oliver Cromwell and others who said that their demands could not be granted because they went against rights to private property. The "Agreement. . ." was amended and refined, but the final document was not presented to Parliament until the Leveller leaders were in prison!

This play shows how the common people joined Cromwell against the Royalists, but then found that the Parliamentarians also would not recognise their democratic rights. At each stage of their struggle they had hopes that God would ensure their victory, and at each stage they found that they could not rely on the Almighty and had to organise themselves.

The Diggers, for example, set up communes to farm the land aiming at independence and self-sufficiency. But came up against the big landowners.

Amongst others, the "Agreement of the People" set out demands on the right to vote, freedom of expression, freedom of religious observance untrammelled by state interference, taxation in proportion to real or personal property, abolition of military conscription, monopolies and excise taxes and also the right not to be tried in secret courts.

The production lives up to the dramatic historic events which have a resonance today when we are campaigning in defence of the post Second World War gains, especially the NHS, and thousands are marching against austerity and privatisation.



Banner by Ed Hall

LETTER: A strange but not surprising demand!

I was interested to read in the Newsletter the report on a meeting with Unison Retired Members' Group. Good to know that trade unionists continue to be active on behalf of retired people: we need as many other organisations as possible to help make older peoples voices heard, whilst attempts to stifle opposition grow stronger.

I am thinking in particular of the Government Bill which plans to demand a voting majority by members of any union of 60% before strike action can be taken. This is a very strange demand considering we now have a Government which was elected by only 24% of the voters!

But perhaps nothing should surprise us now when, for instance, the new Head of NHS England, Simon Stevens, was previously the CEO of United Health Europe and a member of the Alliance for Healthcare Competitiveness which lobbies for the Translantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTP).

Annette Thomas

**Islington University of the Third Age
iU3A - www.islingtonu3a.org**

- Have you finished full-time work?
- Has your family grown up?
- Would you like to try something new?

Islington U3A has more than 400 members. We offer a huge variety of activities, from birdwatching to creative writing, philosophy to yoga.

We are one of the newest of the 900-plus U3As throughout the UK. It isn't a university in the usual sense, as there are no entrance exams, tests or finals. But it is like a university in that through it you can learn a lot, make new friends, and try new activities. And, as at a university, you can have lots of fun. Our main programme is made up of monthly meetings with a speaker, and smaller groups of members to pursue particular interests. Most of the smaller groups meet during the day in members' homes. It is £30 pa to join. We are open to anyone: our members come from Islington and surrounding areas.

**Isabel Dickson, Membership Secretary,
14 Baalabec Road, London, N5 1QN 07784 336219**



THE SOUND OF MUSIC!



What a pleasure to be at the Islington Community Chest and Cripplegate Trust event in the Town Hall on 10 June. Opened by Council Leader, Richard Watts, this was a friendly, joyful, musical evening with performances by the Baluji Music Foundation, the Packington Line Dancers and the Amberligh group of Children in Islington. Just some of the voluntary organisations which have benefited from Council/Cripplegate funding.

“Contrary to the view often expressed in the media by politicians, think-tanks and other commentators, older people have not escaped austerity”

A timely publication from the National Pensioners Convention reveals the truth behind the myth that older people are better off than ever before, and have escaped austerity to the detriment of younger generations. This is a collation of facts and figures from the Office of National Statistics and other reputable sources on:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ● Income | ● Housing |
| ● Health | ● Social exclusion and Isolation |
| ● Fuel poverty and winter mortality | ● Lifestyle |
| ● Diet | ● Future Generations |

**Copies on www.npcuk.org
Or by post with cheque for 50p payable to “NPC” from
NPC, Walkden House, 10 Melton Street, NW1 2EJ**

Age Audit



2015

A snapshot of older people's lives in the UK

INFORMATION

Every Monday BINGO	At the IPF Hall, 1a Providence Court, Providence Place, N1 0RN Ring Ann for more information 020 7226 7687
Every Wednesday Meditation	Meditation with Marie 11.30 am to 12.30 pm
Wednesdays 8th & 15th July PLAY-TIME FOR SENIORS	1.00 p.m. At the IPF Hall, 1a Providence Court, Providence Place, N1 0RN Things to do, food to eat, and have a chat with friends.
Saturday 11th July GARDEN PARTY	From 1.00 p.m. The garden at Highbury View. Entrance: Garden Gate 87-89 Ronalds Road, N5 1XQ. Come along and bring your friends and family Food, drink, music. SEE PAGE 3 FOR DIRECTIONS
Thursday 16th July IPF FORUM AGM	10.30 a.m. Islington Town Hall. . . . IPF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Our president, Jeremy Corbyn MP , will be in attendance

We want to hear from you.

- Write to Islington Pensioners Forum, 1a Providence Court, Providence Place, N1 0RN
- Call us on: 020 7226 7687 Email us at: ipf@talktalkbusiness.net
- Our office is open from 10.30 a.m. -- 2.30 p.m., Tuesday to Thursday, but please call first.
- Sign up for our online newsletter on our website: www.islingtonpensionersforum.co.uk

Presidents: Jeremy Corbyn MP & Lord Smith of Finsbury **Chair:** George Durack **Secretary:** Dot Gibson
Charity No: 10453081 We are supported by the Cripplegate Foundation and Islington Council

Annual subscription to Islington Pensioners Forum £5 Send a cheque or pay by cash or use this Standing Order Form

Please send completed form to:

Islington Pensioners Forum, 1a Providence Court, Providence Place, N1 0RN

To: The Manager.....Bank (Sort Code / /)

Bank address/post code.....

From: (your name and address).....

Please pay the sum of £..... on the day of (month and year) and then yearly thereafter

From my account: Name.....account number.....

To Islington Pensioners Forum, account number 50014279, Co-op Bank, sort code: 08-90-33

Signed..... Date.....