



Charity No: 1043081

ISLINGTON PENSIONERS FORUM

The voice of Islington's older community

October 2016 Newsletter



Why skeletons? Because we fear we will be dead before there are changes in social care!

Members of IPF at the NPC demo to mark the UN Day of Older People on Friday 30th September outside the Department of Health, Richmond House in Whitehall. A prize if you can give us their names!

“We strongly oppose the imposition of a new contract on junior doctors by the government”

Members at our September Forum meeting took a stand on the side of the junior doctors. This of course is no surprise, because our Forum has consistently supported the junior doctors and their fight to protect patient safety.

However, the reporting of their opposition to the government's new contract is often misrepresented in the media and misunderstood by the general public who are led to believe that these hard-working, dedicated doctors are refusing to work at week-ends.

But they are already working seven days a week, providing care in hospitals throughout the week and at weekends, and quite rightly want to be valued for what they do -- caring for patients every hour of every day!

In the new contract the government sets out that a shift that ends as late as 1.45 a.m. or even a minute before 2 a.m. does not count as a night shift and so would not fall within the new safety limits on working nights in a row.

Thus the new contract devalues junior doctors, not only making them work even more unsocial hours, but also reducing the amount they get paid for working on a Saturday.

We want to be treated by doctors who are not too tired to do their job properly, who have enough time to eat, who are not stressed by the job and also by not having enough time with their partners and children.

This contract is not simply a contract between government/NHS and the doctors, it is between the gov-

ernment/NHS and us, the patients!

It is the junior doctors who are standing up for our NHS and all of us, and so we really do understand why they have decided to call off their proposed five-day strikes. However, it means that it is up to us to defend them and we strongly oppose the imposition of the new contract by the government.

On 28th September judges decided in favour of the government's right to introduce the new contract for junior doctors. The case was taken to court by five junior doctors, including Francesca Silman, who has spoken at one of our Forum meetings. They claimed that the government had no right to IMPOSE the contract, and in the court lawyers representing the Secretary of State for Health said that he had never had the intention of imposing it.

However, in their report of the judgment, BBC News showed a clip of Jeremy Hunt saying on camera that he would be imposing the contract! Therefore, even though the junior doctors did not win their case, the judgement in favour of introducing the new contract was based on the government's case that they had no intention of imposing it.

We therefore urge the boards and chief executives of our local Foundation Hospital Trusts -- Barts and the London, University College Hospital, Camden and Islington Foundation Trust and the Royal Free - - not to enforce the contract, which they cannot be compelled to do. We also urge our local non-foundation trust, the Whittington, not to enforce the contract.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

The in-fighting in both political parties appears to be solved temporarily. Labour do their fighting in public, with every tiny comment and extreme criticism picked up by the press, while the Tory party closes the doors and puts on the gloves. They bash each other and come out with a new leader as though nothing had happened. Democracy at its best!

Jeremy, President of our Islington Pensioners Forum, stays calm (as usual) and in my opinion he made an excellent speech at the Labour Party Conference.

He asked the Labour Party to put their differences aside and get on with the job of opposition to some of the most contentious government legislation on record.

We will need help from those Labour MP's but also from the many who are being badly hurt by the disastrous policies going through Parliament at present.

Groups like our own Pensioners Forum will have to combine with other similar movements, and especially with younger people who are facing

the housing crisis, low pay and precarious work as well as attacks on education.

And we will need the help of the young to deal with the massive problems of care, which will affect all of us at some time in our lives.

No government has paid enough attention to the problem of ageing, but now older people are coming under attack: being blamed for the problems facing the young..

Another relevant issue is the way we treat new technology. The speed of development results in job losses, instead of workers reaping the benefit, and there has been a failure on the part of trade unions to negotiate the shorter working hours and higher pay which new technology should bring.

Do we want to be queuing up to tot up our own bill in supermarkets, doing away with the person behind the till! Also serve-yourself machines in the Post Office are another example of staff reduction, and now we are expected to deal with our health and public services on line!



LOBBY OF PARLIAMENT Wednesday 2nd November

- 11.30 am
Old Palace Yard
(opp. House of
Lords)
- 1-3 pm
Rally/Lobby, in
Room 14 House of
Commons

SPEAKERS:

Ian Blackford MP
(SNP)
Dot Gibson (NPC)
Richard Harrington MP
(Pensions' Minister)
John McDonnell MP
(Shadow Chancellor)
Heather Wakefield
(Unison)
Dave Ward (CWU)

Council is asked to review its decision to cut funding to St. Luke's Early Dementia Service

St Luke's Community Centre is calling for a review on the Council's decision to cut funding towards its Early Dementia Service, which enables eleven local people living with dementia to access day care at its modern Community Centre.

This includes music therapies, seated exercise, reminiscence, arts and crafts and much more. There is transport to and from the Centre, with a freshly made healthy meal at lunchtime.

Islington Council currently contributes funding towards a driver and care worker, with St Luke's contributing extra staff, the venue and therapeutic activities. It is centres like this that enable people with early dementia to remain independent and out of hospital or a care home.



BRITISH TELECOM AND VULNERABLE CUSTOMERS

We received information from the neighbour of an elderly woman who has health problems that she had received a very large telephone bill which included high charges for 123 and 118 calls. After contacting British Telecom the bill was reduced and special arrangements were made to block these expensive services, and so we asked the "Network Controlled Calling" team if we could publish information about their services.

As a team we deal with vulnerable customers who have special requirements and usually are in contact with family members, carers and neighbours who watch out for them.

A majority of our customers have some kind of memory loss dementia or Alzheimer's and we offer two services free of charge to help with managing the outgoing calls they make.

Most of our customers dial 123 and 118 numbers on a daily basis which can be very costly. We have a service that will block all calls to 123 and 118 directly dialled numbers and will connect the service at the request of any third party that feels it would be appropriate for the customer in question.

We do not contact the customer directly as it is not always in their interest to speak to us and can lead to further confusion.

The second service we have is Network Controlled Calling -- again it is free of charge but is very restricting and telephone numbers have to be nominated by the customer's family/carer. Details can be found on our web pages: www.bt.com/includingyou

The biggest issue for a lot of customers (and

me) are telesales calls and we will have a new service coming out later in the year called "BT Black List". We do not have much information yet as it is a new service, but again include it in your newsletter as it will hopefully in the future slow down the amount of telesales calls we all receive.

www.bt.com/nuisancecalls

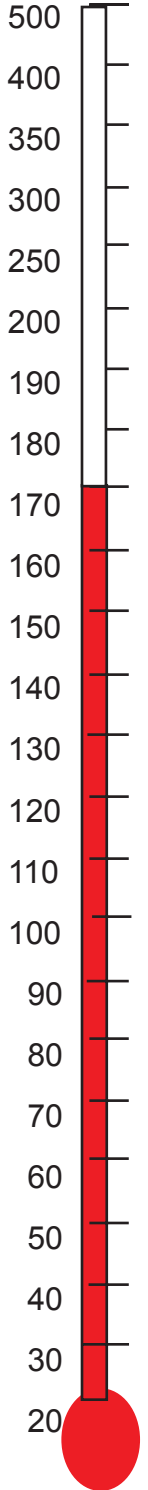
Our direct telephone number is not for any other lines of business as we do not have full access to customers' accounts or fault histories and 0800 800 150 would be the normal number to contact BT for any other inquiries.

I hope this information helps and we would be happy for our number (below) to be passed to family members and carers who may need our assistance in the future but it is not for general use for regular inquiries as we are a very small team dealing with vulnerable customers.

Kind Regards,
Tania Banyard

Network Controlled Calling Specialist
0800 919 591

WE DO NEED YOUR £5 ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION. SO THANKS TO ALL THOSE MEMBERS WHO HAVE PAID, AND SEE THE FORM ON BACK PAGE FOR THOSE WHO HAVEN'T.



Islington Council supports local organisations despite government cuts

Cllr Kaya Comer-Schwartz, chair of Islington's Community Chest, presenting the annual report, says that "The Community Chest is one of the ways that Islington Council works to support local organisations to help them make a difference to the lives of local residents."

We in the Forum know that this is true for we are one of the beneficiaries of this funding, for which we give our sincere thanks.

Community Chest works alongside the Cripplegate Foundation, supporting over 50 different diverse organisations, funding projects supporting over 23,000 Islington residents and enabling over 1,400 local people to volunteer. This is despite massive cuts to the Council's central government funding.

Islington Pensioners Forum is a hub; we have our own activities, and we work closely with Healthy Generations and others, keeping our members and supporters informed of their various educational, recreational, entertaining and relaxing events.





Islington's Mayor comes to our Forum meeting.

Kat Fletcher, the Mayor of Islington spoke at our September Forum meeting. She was elected to the Council in St. George's Ward last year in a by-election.

"As Mayor you see the very best of the borough" she said, and "the traditional role of

mayor was as chief magistrate, but now it is uniting the people of the borough and standing up for all their rights. It is an enormous privilege!"

Kat said that her chosen charity is the Ben Kinsella Trust. Ben lost his life at age 16. It was a knife crime, which is still prevalent in North London and so this

charity is for education and the ending of knife crime. "Prevention is the important thing, so education and laws to ban knives is what the charity stands up for." However, Kat pointed out that many of these crimes are committed using an ordinary kitchen knife and you cannot ban these so the emphasis is on education.

Speaking of our concerns that older people are being blamed for the housing and low pay problems of young people, we suggested that the Mayor could host a meeting of the Young Mayor and Councillors with Forum members as a "generations united" initiative.

Kat readily agreed to this and so -- watch this space -- we will publish the date, time and venue of this meeting when it is to hand.

The collection for the Mayor's chosen charity raised £50.

HEALTH CUTS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

At the September Forum meeting Pam Zinkin explained that junior doctor, Ed Palmer had been transferred from Whittington hospital to East London, and he could not be at the meeting, also that Francesca Silman was busy with the court case. (see page 1)

But we were pleased when she introduced **PROFESSOR SUE RICHARDS**, a leading member of Keep Our NHS Public and governor of the local Highbury Grove School. Sue explained that from 2000 onwards there

had been a rise in NHS funding, which made a big difference to appointments, diagnosis and treatment, but from 2010 there have been serious inroads and now cuts in services.

The "Five Year Forward" view was presented as ending the false boundaries between primary and hospital care and ensuring partnership between medical specialities -- all good ideas. However they are a smokescreen behind which the "Sustainability and Transformation" plans, i.e the cuts, are coming but behind closed doors.

The country had been divided into 44 "footprints" (ours is North Central London comprised of

Islington, Enfield, Barnet, Haringey and Camden) and local officials are under huge pressure to reduce costs. But the general public does not even realise that this is taking place.

Head of the NHS, Simon Stevens has been a long-time supporter of privatisation. He had been an advisor to Tony Blair and subsequently a director of United Health Care (Europe) a private company with its roots in the United States.

Cuts, privatisation, the growing problems of social care and lack of staff were all adding to the problems in which those who can afford it go in for private care, whilst those who cannot are waiting longer for health services. In other words a two-tier system!

Sue said that her daughter was a junior doctor and she knew from first hand what it meant to work the long hours, often without meal breaks, and the stress arising from real concern that tiredness is a hazard to patient safety.

Forum members signed up to a petition urging our local hospitals not to implement the government's junior doctors new contract. (see last para on page 1)

"Keep Our NHS Public"
MEETING
Tuesday 15th November
Islington Town Hall
more details in the Nov Newsletter

THE NEXT PENSIONERS' PARLIAMENT WILL BE HELD



AT THE WINTER GARDENS IN BLACKPOOL ON 7-9 MARCH 2017

This year 15 of us went to the Parliament and we were able to subsidise everybody so that they did not have to pay the full cost. For 2017 we are aiming to make a subsidy, but it depends on our funds, and one of the ways of raising such funds is from the handmade goods at our Christmas Fair.

We expect the full cost of rail fare and b&b for three nights to be £200 (we go on 6th June and return on

9th June) and so if you want to be part of the Islington Pensioners Forum Blackpool delegation you can start saving now. Payments will be received at IPF meetings on 3rd Thursday of each month in the Town Hall. You will have a payment receipt card so that you can keep a check on your payments. We want to make early bookings and so need to know the numbers as soon as possible in the new year.

We will have an item on the agenda at our Forum meetings so that members can ask questions about the Pensioners' Parliament and hear from those who have already attended.



At our Wednesday "lunch and a chat" get-togethers we have been talking about getting ready for our Christmas Fair. Last year we made £500, and want to do even better this year!

So don't tell us you "used to knit", you "used to crochet", you "used to sew" . . . now's the time to do it again! And if your hands are too stiff and rheumy to do any of these things, then there's always packing and labelling etc.

And if you are a man and don't do any of the above, there are plenty of other things we can give you to do! If you are a photographer, then you can make Christmas Cards, and the same if you can draw and paint. Then there are toiletries that can be packaged in Christmasy paper. We can't handle bric-a-brac -- so it's new handmade goods that we are looking for and your ideas are welcome.

At the time of writing there are 84 days to Christmas! We can do a lot in that time and already have a good number of knitted hats, scarves, children's jumpers, cardigans etc.

INFORMATION

Every Monday BINGO 1pm	1pm at IPF Hall, 1a Providence Court, Providence Place, N1 0RN
Every Wednesday 12.30 pm	Lunch and a chat, in the IPF Hall (address above)
Every Wednesday 3 pm - 4 pm	IT and Smart Phones -- learn how to use them! Sessions by "Healthy Generations" and IPF in the IPF Hall (address above)
Thursday 20th October 10.30 am	Forum meeting at Islington Town Hall, Speakers: Councillor Caroline Russell -- air pollution and health and a speaker on the housing crisis
Wednesday 2nd November	LOBBY OF PARLIAMENT (see advert on page 2)
Thursday 17th November 10.30 am	Forum meeting, Borough Police Commander, Catherine Roper, invited

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
- Office open from 10.30 a.m. -- 2.30 p.m., Monday & Wednesday, 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 **Vice Chair:** Bob Collins

Secretary: Dot Gibson **Assistant Secretary:** Annette Thomas

Treasurer: Eric Hill

Charity No: 1043081

Supported by Cripplegate Foundation & Islington Council



Islington Pensioners Forum £5 annual subscription

STANDING ORDER FORM : please send the 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.....

Islington Pensioners Forum

£5 annual subscription

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

Telephone:

Email:.....

Enclosed: £5 cash/cheque

Plus donation? £.....

Cheque payable to:

"Islington Pensioners Forum"

Send to: IPA, 1a Providence Court, Providence Place, N1 0RN

or hand in at the Forum meeting