



ISLINGTON PENSIONERS FORUM

The voice of Islington's older community
June 2018 Newsletter

Charity No: 1043081

Defend the Freedom Pass! Support the Bus Drivers' Bill of Rights!

JOANNE HARRIS, London bus driver and member of Unite the Union spoke at our Forum meeting on 17 May.

This year is the tenth anniversary of the introduction of the pensioners' bus pass to all pensioners. In London we already had the Freedom Pass and there were concessionary passes in some other towns and cities, but the new legislation provided free bus travel in their own town to all pensioners and this could also be used by them on buses in other towns in England.

Therefore members of the National Pensioners Convention all over the country marked the anniversary, giving out leaflets, stating their defence of the bus pass and protesting about the cuts in bus services, particularly in country areas.

Here in Islington, Joanne spoke to us about the Bus Workers' Bill of Rights and the background to it. You will see here that the ten points of the Bill of Rights are very basic (we could even say "ordinary"). Indeed members were amazed that our bus drivers had to ask for such things as "a decent and proper rest break", "a clean, serviced toilet", "safety training", "the right to report safety concerns without fear of retribution" "the right not to be harassed into coming into work when seriously ill and covered by a doctor's note", "the right to have all company rules in writing and clearly displayed".

In the last two years 12,000 people have been injured and 12 people have died in bus accidents! This terrible situation led to a London Assembly report titled "Driven to Destruction", with bus workers themselves being involved for the first time. But so far Transport for London has "buried" the 11 points on which that report requested answers.

Our generation remembers the Greater London-wide, publicly owned, London Transport, with canteens in every garage and a fleet-wide union wages and conditions contract. Joanne pointed out that deregulation and privatisation mean that now there are 16 or 17 private bus companies. These have different contracts for their workers; safety is not a priority to the managers,

neither is the welfare of their staff. But stress is a huge problem for the bus drivers, and the Bill of Rights is like a cry for help to overcome this stress, but Transport for London denies this, and the attitude is: "stress is the drivers' own fault and they should learn to manage it", said Joanne.

Our meeting thanked Joanne, and agreed to work with her and other bus workers' representatives in support of their Bill of Rights. If you experience problems on your journey, remember the driver also has problems.

As a first step we will produce a printed message for our members to hand to bus drivers letting them know that we support the Bill of Rights. This is part of our generations united campaign!

The London Bus Driver

Bill of Rights

We the TfL Bus Drivers proclaim this Bill of Rights to which all London bus drivers shall be entitled and TFL shall compel all its contracted bus operators to adopt without delay.

1. *The Right to a safe work schedule without forced overtime or loss of pay.*
2. *The Right to a decent and proper rest break in the working day.*
3. *The Right to drive a safe and well-maintained vehicle.*
4. *The Right to clean, serviced toilet and rest facilities on all bus routes.*
5. *The Right to report safety concerns without fear of retribution from TfL or employers.*
6. *The Right, when seriously ill and covered by a doctor's note to not be harassed into coming into work until fit to do so.*
7. *The Right to relevant and timely safety training.*
8. *The Right to drive without being forced to answer radio messages and texts from Controllers whilst in motion.*
9. *The Right to have all company rules in writing and clearly displayed.*
10. *The Right to be treated with dignity and respect by our employers, TfL and the public.*

Signed on behalf of
London's Unite Bus Drivers



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

First, thank you to Bob Collins co-chair, who has kindly acted during my absence and my thanks to everyone who has wished me a speedy recovery.

Being in hospital and then at home for three months has given me lots of time to reflect on the world — not a pretty sight!

But it is our task as IPF to be aware and critical; to share with younger people our experiences (before social media!) and at the same time to join with them to change the world!

Take Carillion for example. How can the excessive greed of the Directors of this vast private company get away with failure to deliver public services and yet fill their pockets with millions from tax payers? We must not allow this kind of thing to go on!

Another great sham is the railway fiasco: the Eastern line being taken into public ownership for the second time but the Tory minister continues to subsidise the two main firms, Virgin and Stagecoach, leaving us to pick up the finances.

The Windrush Scandal

There are too many examples for us to publish here, of people who have been shut out and hounded by the Home Office as a result of inhuman, racist immigration policies. But let us take just one local victim

After a seven-year ordeal Balvin Marshall has now been told that he has the right to stay in the UK; but now he has to build a compensation case.

Despite losing his job, his home and his entitlements to benefits/healthcare and sleeping in a building used as a small warehouse 64-year-old Balvin Marshall, kept a treasured file of payslips and letters proving that he had lived in Britain for 48 years and that he worked for the private company Enterprise as an Islington Council roadsweeper,

Among his papers is a copy of *Islington Tribune* from 2011 when the paper first told of his plight! That was seven years ago! This makes us ask ourselves: did we read this report and “pass on the other side”?

The Windrush scandal raises questions for all of us.... we must build our communities, reach out to those in trouble and create friendly, accessible local groups. We need to listen and act!

The Windrush scandal is the subject of our next Forum meeting on Thursday 21 June, 10.30 am in Islington Town Hall.

In fact service cuts all round have huge repercussions: in education and youth services, the NHS, social care, and all other Council services. People are even in danger in our prisons!

Nottingham prison had five deaths in four weeks between September and October last year and now another death this year. The Chief Inspector of Prisons said that the prison was “fundamentally unsafe”, the Minister says “things have now changed!” But have they? Whatever the case — it’s too late for the grieving families.

Another thing on my mind is the House of Lords. Not only do we pay its members £300 a day, but when they take decisions against government, the Prime Minister simply appoints a few more of them to her side. In my “everyday world” that’s blatant cheating! We need to get rid of this unelected monstrosity.

**Finally, hoping to see you at our
Annual General Meeting on Thursday 19th July.**



Head Office: Marchmont Community Centre, 62 Marchmont Street, London WC1N 1AB
Tel: 020 7837 6622 • Email: info@npcuk.org • Web: www.npcuk.org

Sent by email to: public.enquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP
Home Secretary
Direct Communications Unit
2 Marsham Street
London, SW1P 4DF

16 April 2018

Dear Home Secretary

I am writing to you on behalf of our one million affiliated members, regarding the recent stories of possible deportation facing a generation of around 500,000 citizens from Commonwealth countries who came over to the UK before 1971.

Our understanding is that under the 1971 Immigration Act, all Commonwealth citizens already living in the UK were given indefinite leave to remain - but the right to free movement between Commonwealth nations was ended from that date onwards. The Home Office did not keep a record of those granted leave to remain or issue any paperwork confirming it, meaning it is difficult for the individuals to now prove they are in the UK legally.

It is widely accepted that the “Windrush” generation came to Britain to help rebuild the country after WWII; they worked hard, paid their taxes, raised children and understandably see Britain as their home. In addition, they are of course, now into their retirement years.

I therefore hope the UK government can acknowledge the contribution they have made and grant all Commonwealth citizens who arrived before 1971 indefinite leave to remain, along with ensuring that they continue to receive their full entitlement to their UK state pension based on their National Insurance contributions and credits.

Yours sincerely

Jan Shortt
General Secretary

Above: the “Windrush” letter sent by the General Secretary of the National Pensioners Convention to Amber Rudd MP before she was replaced as Home Secretary

PLEASE BE CAREFUL!

Following the warnings in the IPF newsletter about scams and bogus callers etc, I am sharing this notice that was handed out at the Peel Centre:

"Bogus workmen: targetting the elderly pretending to be from water board etc.

"This man claimed to be a worker from the Council, but when checked, the Council had no knowledge of him:

"Description: white male, age 50+, wearing a blue shirt and grey jumper, driving a vehicle number: LN17 YPC"

Eula Harrison

40 OF US GOING TO BLACKPOOL

We are pleased to report that there will be a delegation of 40 going to the National Pensioners Convention (NPC) Pensioners' Parliament in Blackpool (11-15 June) from Islington Pensioners Forum and the Tottenham and Wood Green Pensioners' Action Group.

On Wednesday 2nd May we had a really good meeting in our hall at Providence Place with a buffet and a short film about the NPC. This gave us the chance to give information to the Blackpool "first-timers" and the chance for them to ask questions. We are hoping that going by coach this year will be successful. We will print a report in the July newsletter.

Dot Gibson

OUR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY 19 JULY

Our President, Jeremy Corbyn, has sent a message saying that he will come to our AGM. But we are keeping our fingers crossed because we know how important things crop up for him.

The Annual Report will be produced after we come back from the Pensioners' Parliament so it might be ready for distribution at the beginning of July with the newsletter.

ROBOTS IN CARE HOMES

A £2million EU-funded trial in partnership with the University of Bedfordshire and Advinia Health Care, one of the UK's largest care providers, will be launched in September to introduce humanoid companions into care homes. The robots are said to be able to recognise the needs and emotions of frail residents, and might be able to prevent loneliness and isolation, improve mental health and reduce the pressure on family caregivers.

Judy Downey, from the Relatives and Residents Association and a member of the NPC's health and social care working party suggested this was "treating people like commodities. The key to looking after someone is having a relationship in which you might

notice if someone is upset after a phone call or if they look unwell. What matters is the smile, the human touch."

NOTE: The robots do not have working limbs and cannot carry out essential tasks.

from NPC National Officers' report

PRIVATE PENSION SAVINGS

With the closure of occupational pension schemes, workers are being advised to save up individually in private insurance companies for a pension additional to their state pension.

A new report from Sir Steve Webb at Royal London has suggested that the average person will have to save £260,000 over their lifetime to enjoy a basic income in retirement. This would give a retirement income of just over £9,000 a year.

Webb, a former pension minister in the Coalition government said that most savers in the auto-entrolment scheme were likely to accumulate only half the target amount. In fact, the average sum saved into pension pots is around £30,000 to £40,000.

from NPC National Officers' report

A LOSS OF £1,664 A YEAR TO PENSIONERS

The UK basic state pension is £164.35 a week. Based on the Barbara Castle formula of the state pension linked to either the Retail Price Index or wages, the pension would now be £196 a week had the link with earnings not been broken by Margaret Thatcher's government. That's a loss of £32 a week (£1,664 a year).

GARDEN PARTY

Highbury View Tenants invite you to a free Garden Party in their beautiful garden on

Saturday 9th June, from 1 pm
87 Ronalds Road, N5 1XQ

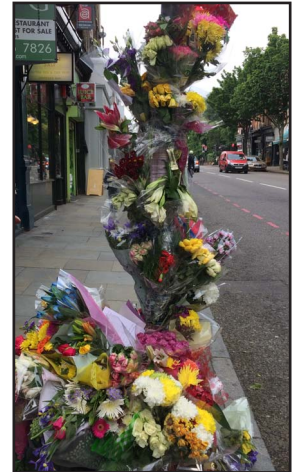
(the Highbury Fields end of Ronalds Road)

Enjoy good food and drink, music (The Pearly Kings) a tai chi display, and the company of family, friends and neighbours

“Deep concern. . . healing through investing. . .we older people believe in the youth of today. . .”

WE REPORTED LAST MONTH:

- At least £39m has been cut from London council youth services in the last seven years
- Across 22 councils, 800 youth service full-time posts have been removed
- An inquiry into the capital’s youth services found that 81 youth clubs and council youth projects have closed their doors since 2011
- There has been a 44% youth service budget cut since 2011, with an average council taking £1.5m out of youth services over this time



Flowers in Upper Street for Marcel Campbell killed on 21st May

On Tuesday 8th May, five members of Islington Pensioners Forum went to the monthly meeting of the Tottenham and Wood Green Pensioners Action Group in the Tottenham Leisure Centre. The subject of the meeting was “the stabbings and shootings of young people”; there were at least 100 members of the Action Group in attendance, and the following notice had been circulated in advance:

“ The reason for this meeting is our deep concern that there is a growing problem of stab-bings and shootings of young people in the country and not just in Haringey. We believe that our society needs healing through investing in youth services, education and social care, policing and mental health and providing support for vulnerable young people to deal with drugs, gangs, bullying and the fear culture. We want to create a more cohesive soci-ety that supports its youth and is inclusive, fully respecting diversity, gender and helping young people grow up in our great city. We older people believe in the youth of today! Our young people are the future; they have great promise and positive energy and we want to help young people to realise their full potential.”

There was a message from David Lammy MP for Tottenham. . . .

I am sorry that, because of a three-line whip in the House of Commons, I cannot be with you to discuss this very important topic and listen to the discussion. There is a huge spike in the movement of cocaine on the streets which has contributed to all the bloodshed seen so far on practically a daily basis. Knife crime is up 22 per cent and gun crime up by 11 per cent

Most of these killings and stabbings are brought about by the movement of drugs and they are mostly gang related. We are now seeing in parts of the UK young men and boys becoming foot soldiers for the gangsters and the Mafia bosses further up the tree.

The foot soldiers are getting younger; the barons re-cruit men and boys to do their dirty work. Some of these carriers are so young they are still in school uni-form, this is no longer unusual. They groom them with new trainers and tracksuits and give them more money in their hands than they have ever had before, making

them feel important and part of the gang.

Some of the youths are as young as 13, who cannot be sent to trial as they are too young. However they run the risk of being stabbed or killed by rival gangs if they think that they are taking over their territory.

Many of these youngsters come from single parent homes and just want to be loved and have the attention of others.

The shootings are reported on a daily basis, but not the stabbings which often do not kill but cause dreadful traumas; knife wounds that cause loss of organs, in-testines etc but not death. Others are beaten if they don’t want to be carriers any more; they are run over, chased, or even have a dog set on them.

Enough is enough! I am hoping that you will help us to come to a strategy that we can use to end the surge in violent crime on all our streets fuelled by Mafia style drug barons.

Speakers included a police officer and a number of people in charities leading youth activi-ties and dealing with young people’s problems. The meeting agreed to respond positively to David Lammy MP’s appeal. Islington Pensioners Forum executive committee will discuss this and make proposals to work with the Tottenham and Wood Green Pensioners Action Group and others, particularly in North London as part of our “generations united” campaign.

Many thanks to Barchester Healthcare for helping us to continue our Wednesday IT classes, enabling older people to understand and use modern technology — so important in this day and age!

Our picture shows Earl Elliott, general manager of Cheverton Lodge, Barchester Healthcare handing over a large replica of the Barchester cheque for £500 — a donation to help us continue our Wednesday IT classes.



**You are invited to the Cheverton Lodge Open Day 12 noon to 4 p.m. on Saturday 9th June
30a Cheverton Road, N19 3AY (near Archway Station)**

....NHS Matters....NHS Matters....NHS Matters....NHS Matters

There is such a lot happening in our NHS . We will celebrate 70 years of our NHS at a big demonstration on Saturday June 30th.

And we must have fun. but it is equally important to protect it for ourselves and the younger generation against persistent and secretive attack over years.

Its survival as a publicly funded, publicly accountable health service available to all based on clinical need, not financial status, free at the point of need, is threatened more than ever.

The state of the NHS is now so serious that politicians and the Institute of Fiscal Studies report the only way of funding is to raise income tax so each household pays £2000 a year.

There is no mention in newspaper reports that this should be graduated, that the richest could and should pay more, that there are other ways of raising money for the NHS ; about making health, social care and education priorities for government expenditure rather than cutting corporation tax, spending on defence and huge expensive projects and so on.

We also need to stop drug companies charging the NHS extortionate prices for medicines. Stopping privatisation which costs us more and allows the ultra rich like Richard Branson to sue the NHS because Virgin did not get a contract.

But we also have to try to prevent the government's policy of selling NHS land to private developers. For example, we need 40,000 more NHS nurses but they and other key workers could soon be turfed out of their homes to make way for the super-rich.

Secret plans have been revealed to turn the Royal Free nurses' home into luxury flats. The new site would be

By Pam Zinkin

home to flats worth £10m, but not a single affordable home!. There would be 162 luxury flats and local agents say the three-bedroom penthouse flats could sell for up to £10m each! It seems that the potential builders need not worry about affordable housing lowering the tone of the development as the legally required affordable units can be housed in a separate development on the main hospital site.

The Whittington hospital is similarly threatened with the appointment of Ryhurst to oversee the sale of NHS land and this is part of Rydons — the company which was central to the Grenfell Tower development.

And so you can see that celebrating 70 years of our NHS also means defending our NHS. There are so many things to watch and speak up about.

We suggest to our Islington Forum members that we could make cakes to say thanks to NHS staff on the actual 70th birthday on 5 July. Let's get in touch with Islington Keep Our NHS Public who organised it last year Our Committee will report on the 30th June demonstration and the "cake" proposal to our Forum meeting on 21st June so that we can co-ordinate our efforts.



**Celebrate and Demonstrate!
SATURDAY 30 JUNE
12 noon Portland Place, London, W1A**

INFORMATION

BINGO every Monday	1 pm at 1a Providence Court, Providence Place, N1 0RN
Lunch and a chat on Wednesdays	1 pm in the IPF Hall, address above
IT and Smart Phones on Wednesdays	3.30 p.m in the IPF Hall, address above
Thursday 21st June 10.30 a.m.	Town Hall. Forum meeting at Islington Town Hall. Speaker on the Windrush Scandal
Thursday 19th July 10.30 a.m.	Town Hall. IPF Annual General Meeting — with Jeremy Corbyn — our President in attendance.... BRING YOUR FRIENDS

REMEMBER: The Highbury View GARDEN PARTY will be held on Saturday 9th June at 1 p.m. We are keeping our fingers crossed for good weather!

ISLINGTON PENSIONERS FORUM (membership £5 a year, cheques payable to IPF)

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Charity Number: 1043081

Supported by Cripplegate Foundation, the Big Lottery and Islington Council

Office opens from 10.30 a.m.- 2.30 p.m. Monday and Wednesday, but please call first. Sign up for our online Newsletter on our website: www.islingtonpensionersforum.org

Presidents: Jeremy Corbyn MP & Lord Smith of Finsbury

Joint Chairs: George Durack, Bob Collins

Secretary: Dot Gibson **Assistant Secretary:** Annette Thomas **Treasurer:** Eric Hill

Committee members: Frances Bradley, Joyce Herron, Supa Kusumratana, David Milner, Blanche Woodbridge, Pam Zinkin, Eddie Zissler

DATA PROTECTION

(this statement is required by law)

Under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the EU General Data Regulation 2018, organisations must collect, handle and store personal information. These rules apply regardless of whether data is stored electronically, on paper or on other materials. To comply with the law, personal information must be collected and used fairly.

Islington Pensioners Forum stores members and volunteers' postal addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses and we ensure that these are used fairly, stored safely and not disclosed unlawfully. We will never share an individual's data with third parties without the individual's consent unless required to do so by law.