

Thursday 8th November 2018 - Minutes

Apologies: CC, JC, CA

Attendees: JG, MR, LS, CB, AP, JL, AL, CR, JD, JDR, CC, FL, AS, MDS, RH, DM, JG

Guest speaker: Jen Layden – Glasgow City Councillor and Convenor for Equalities and Human Rights

Introduced by AL – Jen Layden was elected to the Council for the first time in May 2017 and almost immediately made the Convenor for Equalities and Human Rights, which is the first role of its kind in Scotland - <https://glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=22670>

Jen Layden's talk discussed a range of topics:

- Her role is to ask 'how do we make Glasgow a human rights city? So far human rights have been included in the City charter and the Council's strategic plan
- Campaign issues – lifting the ban on the right to work for asylum seekers, improving recourse to public funds for refugees and asylum seekers, violence against women
- 'Equally Safe' policy on prostitution, trafficking and domestic violence which takes a human rights approach - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/equally-safe-scotlands-strategy-prevent-eradicate-violence-against-women-girls/>
- The council is currently putting together equalities impact assessments – how do we protect human rights despite budgetary cuts?
- Potential for future collaboration with Scottish PEN <https://scottishpen.org/>
- Big current issues for Glasgow – Serco evictions, provision of British Sign Language, period poverty, increasing diversity in politics (e.g. the new political shadowing scheme), mental health amongst the LGBT community, resources for asylum seekers.
- Black slave trade recognition – where did the money come from for the city's oldest buildings? Plans to set up a slavery museum. Jen also recommended that we watch the recent BBC documentary on Glasgow's role in the slave trade - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0brjnkq> (only available for a couple more weeks on BBC iPlayer)

We finished with a lively Q&A session covering subjects such as:

- Extent of backlash from council and the public?
- Glasgow as a dispersal city for asylum seekers
- How to engage the Council on Write for Rights 2018
- Transgender rights
- Glasgow's approach to knife crime – lessons to learn
- PEN project
- Football sectarianism

- Bridging the Gap in the Gorbals as an example of an effective project

Treasurer's report (JG)

Approximately £240 in the bank. Glasgow West is seeking contributions for the postage costs for Write for Rights.

Secretary's report (FL)

- Good news! Me Nam (Mother Mushroom) the Vietnamese blogger, who had been serving a 10-year prison sentence has been release. She was one of the cases for Write for Rights 2018 - <https://twitter.com/amnesty/status/1052907219958845440>
- Booking now open for the 2019 National Conference and AGM (see below). 13th January – resolution submission deadline. 8th March – booking closes.
- Write for Rights Launch in Parliament, Wednesday 12th December, 12.30 – 2pm. Write to your MP and ask them to drop into Amnesty's annual human rights day reception anytime between 12.30 – 2pm on the 12th December at Speakers House. There they will be able to find out about this year's cases and take action.
- Write for Rights 2018 – materials now available online and to order - https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights?fbclid=IwAR0-wMGwcutN2QK_kQZhsZc_zyiyioKaX33bu1jilJUhdYU4h4uh8xNW-4

Past events

Scotland Activist's Conference

About 100 people attended this year's conference in Dundee. Members of the group who attended agreed it was a great success and we came home with lots of new ideas and inspiration. Thank you to MDS for helping to organise a fantastic conference.

Future events

Human Rights Act Stall – Saturday 10th November, Mitchell Library, 9am – 4.30pm (AL/ FL)

Celebrating the 20th birthday of the Human Rights Act! We will be talking to members of the public about the Act encouraging members of the public to sign a petition supporting it- <https://savetheact.uk/>

Imprisoned Writers Event – Thursday 1st November, Scottish Parliament

A reception to mark the Day of The Imprisoned Writer an annual, international day intended to recognise and support writers who have been persecuted for exercising their basic human right to freedom of expression. The event is sponsored by Ruth McGuire MSP and will include a selection of readings of work by writers who have been threatened, imprisoned or attacked for expressing themselves.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/day-of-the-imprisoned-writer-2018-scottish-parliament-tickets-51398497289#>

Write for Rights event at Milk Café – Thursday 29th November

<https://www.facebook.com/events/750212341996400/>

Comedy night at the Stand – 28th January 2019

National Conference and AGM in Nottingham – 13th to 14th April 2019

Booking now open!

https://www.eventsforce.net/blueprint/frontend/reg/thome.csp?pageID=44242&eventID=110&CSPCHD=001001000000cWcWCccS4LOGWgOpr962H3PVDGqVC8Hs4cann_

The following events were not discussed at the meeting as arrangements were made afterwards:

STUC's anti-racism march and rally, Saturday 24th November, Glasgow

On Saturday 24th November, Glasgow West Amnesty Group will be joining Glasgow's annual St Andrew's Day Anti-Racism March and Rally, organised by the Scottish Trade Union Congress (STUC) Black Workers Committee.

Glasgow Amnesty will join the march to oppose racism and stand in solidarity with those facing racism around the world.

The March is assembling on Glasgow Green at 10.30am. We don't know exactly where in the park the march will gather, so we encourage Amnesty members to assemble just inside the park, beside the West beer garden/ Templeton building near the People's Palace by 10.40am. The Amnesty bloc will then walk together to join the march. If you arrive after 10.40, head for the main march and look out for the large yellow Amnesty banner and come join us.

The march will head off at 11am. It will finish at noon at Adelaides on Bath Street, at which point there will be an indoor rally which will finish at 1.30pm, although you would be able to leave any time after the march.

The main Facebook event page is <https://www.facebook.com/events/840298416360766/> which will post any updates ahead of the march (this is the STUC event page, Glasgow West Amnesty do not own or manage this page).

Daytime group's Write for Rights stall, Saturday 8th December, Hillhead Library, 10am – 4pm

Volunteers to help with the stall requested. Get in touch with the Glasgow West group via social media or email for more information.

Urgent actions (MR)

Urgent Action: Wave of detentions of students and activists in Nicaragua

Detention of student leaders and other social activists have increased in Nicaragua as a punishment for protests.

UA 169/18 issued 17/09/2018

[Download](#)

Urgent Action update: Poor medical treatment for detained activist in China

The health of Huang Qi, founder and director of human rights website “64 Tianwang”, has further deteriorated.

5th update on UA 284/16 issued 25/10/2018

[Download](#)

Europe newsletter (CC)

Claire took us through Amnesty’s Europe newsletter and highlighted the following actions on female refugees in Greece and the abuse they have suffered.

www.amnesty.org/en/get-involved/take-action/relatives-of-the-disappeared-must-be-respected-not-attacked/

Please send a message of solidarity via this web link:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2018/10/defending-the-rights-of-refugee-and-migrant-women-in-greece/>

Or publicise the research and tweet via this link:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2018/10/refugee-women-in-greece/>

Ali Arrass – legal fees (CC)

Ali Arrass needs support with his legal fees. It had been suggested that the group could donate some money towards this. However, this is against Amnesty’s fundraising policy. However, individual members are still encouraged to make personal donations if they can.

Next meeting

Get festive at our annual Write for Rights meeting on the 13th December.