

April 2025 Updates



Glasgow West Amnesty International

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[Join](#) Amnesty International, get involved with our local AI Group and play your part in helping to promote and defend vital human rights across the world.

We warmly invite newcomers and familiar faces alike to attend the next meeting of the Amnesty International Glasgow West Group. This email includes:

- Details of our forthcoming April 2025 meeting;
- Information on our local Group member Paolo's fundraising marathon run for Amnesty;
- Links to current AIUK activities;
- The minutes from our local Group's March 2025 meeting; and
- A note of our local Group's monthly meeting dates for the year ahead.

April 2025 Glasgow West AI Group Meeting

Thursday 10th April, Woodlands International Methodist Church, 7:30pm – 9pm

The next Glasgow West Amnesty meeting takes place on **Thursday 10th April 2025 at 7.30pm – 9pm** in Woodlands International Church, Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LW.

We would love to see you there!

Our next meeting will include:

- Update on a planned gathering for all AI Groups based in Scotland to take place in Perth on 7th June 2025;
- Further discussion on activities to celebrate 2025 being the 50th anniversary of Amnesty International in Glasgow;
- Feedback from our Group Chair on a recent AI Training event;
- Updates from our **local group co-ordinators** on their activities; and
- Undertaking **letter writing** on recent [Urgent Action](#) alerts from AIUK.

Group Member Paolo Grifa is Running a Marathon (And Fundraising!)



Photo: Paolo Grifa

Paolo Grifa has been a supporter of Amnesty International for many years in Italy.

He participated at the World Social Forum in Genova 2001 and in Florence 2002. Paolo campaigned in particular for LGBTQ rights in Italy and also about the conflict in Palestine.

He moved to Glasgow with his family 10 years ago but never got involved with AI UK. Last year he saw in the Amnesty newsletter that they were looking for runners for the **Paris Marathon** and he thought "*I could participate that way, fundraising*".

Although not a big runner, Paolo has done a couple of marathons in the past. It gave him strong motivation to do something for Amnesty International.

"Then I got more curious and involved and started to attend the local group meetings in Glasgow. I really had always admired AI for everything they've been doing for many decades. The 'what can we do' attitude of its members, which I found has not changed in the years and is not different between Italy and the UK. It is really an international movement."

To donate Paolo's journey, please visit his dedicated [fundraising page](#).

Thank you!

[Paolo's fundraising page](#)

AIUK Local Updates

The latest updates for Local AI Groups produced by AIUK can be found via the following [link](#).
Selected updates are included below.

Social Security in the UK



Invitation to Amnesty International UK event:

How Social Security in the UK erodes human rights and dignity.

Thursday 8 May 2025, 6.30pm.

Join in-person (central Manchester) or online: [Register your spot](#).

Our social security system should be a secure and stable foundation.

But for too many people, that foundation is crumbling. Life's challenges: a missed payday, your landlord raising your rent, getting ill, can quickly create a domino effect.

One setback leads to another, making it harder to keep up with rent, stay healthy, or move forward in life.

Join us on **Thursday 8 May 2025, 6.30pm, either in-person (central Manchester) or online** to hear about Amnesty International UK's new report into the realities of social security in the UK. A panel of expert speakers, including people who have been affected directly, will discuss:

- Why social security is a human right.
- Why – when that right is violated – it impacts so many of your other human rights.
- Why poverty is a political choice and what can be done about it.

Action: Take action to stop the cuts!

Please sign and share our new action to the Prime Minister, calling for him to stop the cuts to social security in this country and build a fair, compassionate system that protects everyone:

Prime Minister: Stop the Cuts.

For any questions, please contact the [IAR team](#).

[Register here](#)

Amnesty Disabled People's Human Rights Network



Amnesty Disabled People's Human Rights Network would love to keep you updated about other areas of our work, including information about our campaigns, fundraising appeals and events – and the impact we have by working together.

Please let us know if you would like to receive these emails: [you can sign up for our newsletter here](#).

Follow us on:

- [Bluesky](#)
- [Instagram](#)

More Details and Updates

For further details of the above and other items featured in most recent AIUK Local Groups' Update, click on this [link](#).

Updates from AI Scotland Office

Please click this [link](#) for the latest updates from AI's Scotland Office. An excerpt of some of the activities is set out below.

What We've Been Up To



The Scottish Government must now finally acknowledge that [...] Scottish Enterprise's human rights checks [...] are simply not credible. At best, they are insufficient. At worst, they risk complicity with the most serious of international humanitarian law violations.



Neil Cowan, Scotland Programme Director

Read the full article [in The National](#) (note: requires a subscription).

Gaza genocide

After months of research into the atrocities in Gaza, Amnesty International finally launched its* [report concluding that Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza](#)* in early December.

Given clear evidence of genocide, we renewed [our previous calls](#) on the Scottish government to prevent Scottish Enterprise from awarding grants to arms companies manufacturing weapons used to breach international law.

The report and its potential implications for Scottish Enterprise received front-page news coverage, which you can read [*here](#) *and [here](#). On 5 December, the National also published an op-ed by Neil [urging for immediate government action](#).

In January, Mercedes Villalba MSP submitted a parliamentary motion on Amnesty's genocide report. The motion called on the UK to uphold its legal obligations and to immediately end all arms transfers to Israel. It also flagged the risk that, given Scottish Enterprise's ongoing support for arms companies, Scotland may also be at risk of complicity. Thank you to everyone who contacted their MSP and asked them to support the motion, which you can read [here](#). Your urgent action helped it to achieve cross-party support.

There's still time to get involved: Download our template emails to Deputy First Minister Kate Forbes, Minister for Business Richard Lockhead and your MSP [here](#) to help us hold the government to account.

Human Rights Bill

Updates on our campaign to make international human rights treaties part of Scots law

Over the break, [we responded to a consultation](#) on the Scottish government's *Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming Strategy*. The strategy will affect how public bodies develop policy, deliver services, and decide how money is allocated and spent. The Amnesty Scotland team highlighted the importance of:

1. fully incorporating international human rights treaties into Scots law
2. using a robust evidence base on human rights and equality
3. ensuring resourcing is sufficient to make mainstreaming is effective.

Upcoming Dates / events

For updates on planned AIUK training and events for AI activists, Click on this [link](#).



March 2025 Updates

AI Glasgow West Group Meeting Thurs 13th March 2025

Minutes

1. Welcome and apologies

- **Attendees:** Ailig, Paolo, Andrew, Neil, Carol, Claire, Kirstie, Clara & Luca.
- **Apologies:** Mal, Cait, Merle & Mhairi.

2. Agreement of previous meeting minutes [here](#)

3. Team Updates (list of roles [here](#)):

(a) Treasurer (Kirstie)

i. The Stand Comedy Night

- A. our current bank balance = £903
- B. £1,890 raised for AIUK Charitable Wing; £466 through raffle & collection tins. Plus £20 post-event - Thank you, Jean!
- C. Mal spent £20 as a donation on social media advertising the event – Thank you, Mal!

ii. Fundraising: Paolo is running the Paris Marathon for Amnesty - pls share: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/paolo-grifa-humanrights>

iii. **Claire** to ask Cait/Mal to share on SM - see if we can tag national office

- **Andrew** to see if Scotland AI can share on national SM

(b) Social Media & website (Mal/Cait)

- Update on Twitter/Bluesky discussion? <https://www.helloquitx.com/> - no update, both absent

(c) Local Political Outreach

- Paolo - invite Kaukab Stewart, MSP to come to a meeting (Neil Cowan suggested)
 - i. invited - she's busy, maybe future meeting, but seems unlikely in short term.
 - ii. we could look to have a collab with another org so be stronger
 - iii. one of us could go to a drop-in MP surgery
 - iv. Indicated that there is likely to be a proposed Human Rights Bill in the SNP manifesto, but in an amended format from the previous proposal.
- v. **Next steps:**
 - A. **Paulo** email Neil Cowan w update - ask next tactics re. civil society pushing for it so SNP commit to it? & what other orgs we can link up with - open letter. Important to lobby across political parties, esp if likelihood of a coalition government.
 - B. **Ailig** to let us know next Kaukab surgery drop-in. Our msg to her is we can help progress it, we care, how might we assist?

- (d) **Regional/Country focus**
 - i. **South East Asia/ Myanmar** (Mal) - absent, no update
 - ii. **Korea** (Clara) - no Korea update; June 4th Commemoration of Tiananmen Square - last year was in Edinburgh with HK group, this year maybe in Glasgow
 - (e) **Theme focus - US Death penalty** - Mal to inform Death Penalty Network / follow up work on California - absent, no update
 - (f) **Prisoner of Conscience/Individual At Risk Update** (Cait - India BK16 - update held over from previous month) - absent, no update
4. Actions/updates from previous meeting Minutes:
- (a) **Seenaryo (Lebanon) film screening** - postponed until ~September
 - (b) **Andrew to link up Paolo with student amnesty group** - done, but Paolo not managed to link up yet
 - (c) **The Stand Comedy Night** - 150 tickets were sold, raising a total of £1,890 for AIUK's charitable trust. £369 in cash; £97 from card reader machine
 - i. Save the date - Thurs 19th Feb 2026 for the next one!
5. Invite from Philippa (AI Local Groups Administrator – Community Organising):
- Scotland has been identified as one of the three Office-led **AI Gatherings** "We have been working with the **Perth** Group and in collaboration with the Perth Minority Group in organising the event in **early June 2025 (7th)**. We are now in the process of forming a Working group to collaborate on setting the agenda and programme for the event and would like to invite members of the Glasgow West Group to join the Working Group.
- More info on the gatherings:
- The Regional Gathering will foster connection by bringing together local Amnesty activists and like-minded communities to address pressing human rights issues. By building collective power, the gathering will expand the movement through meaningful engagement with communities beyond Amnesty, establishing impactful partnerships. Furthermore, it aims to reinvigorate regional action, inspiring and mobilising attendees to champion human rights campaigns with renewed energy and dedication.*
- Andrew to let Philippa know there were no volunteers from our group to help organise, but that we are definitely interested in attending!
6. **Glasgow Daytime group invite:** Alex Jackson will be giving a presentation on Human Rights in Eritrea at our next meeting, Thursday 20 March at 13.00 - all welcome - at The Wee Retreat in the Southside
7. **Activist Training:**
- (a) **Activism Skills Training: How to Recruit New Members** - Tuesday, March 25 · 6 - 8pm GMT
 - (b) **Campaign Effectiveness 101 Tickets, Sat, Mar 29, 2025 at 10:00 AM | Eventbrite**

8. 2025 is Glasgow West AI group's 50th anniversary! - see Ideas doc [here](#).

- Do we want to organise events to mark it? Ideas:
 - (a) Publicity in local press to help raise awareness of AI, recruit new members & raise funds
 - (b) Historical Resources:
 - i. Andrew received resources from former Group secretary, Brian Donnelly, who was active from the 1970s.
 - ii. Merle has a collection of minutes and correspondence covering the period from the Group's founding in 1975 until 2002. This includes local press cuttings and information on the planning and events associated with our Freedom Festival, which was an art festival that took place in the city over several months in 1995.
 - It was suggested to involve John Gerard & wife Margaret - previous members - Mal has contact details
 - also Jill Young - Christine has contact details
- **Andrew** to link up with Daytime Group to ask if they too would like to participate / organise events, etc - hopefully speak at their March meeting
- More ideas!
 - Press articles over this year - **Andrew** to look at
 - interview previous members - get into local press/SM
 - Alexander Dakar painting of Chile football stadium could link to previous 1970's football tournament human rights campaign
 - Exhibition in a Library - Mitchell Library? Ailig volunteered to ask Mitchell in the future
 - Link in w film screening - e.g. "All Static and Noise" - Uighurs / "She's in Jail" - HK - no volunteers at meeting to look into this

9. **Urgent Appeals** - Merle:

- (a) [Ukraine/Russian Federation: Respect The Rights Of Injured Pow](#)
- (b) [Iran: Women's Rights Defender Resentenced To Death](#)
- (c) Kirstie got a return to sender from the Write for Rights Tunisia case

10. AOB

- (a) Scottish Government is undertaking a review of funding by Scottish Enterprise given to companies who create armaments
- (b) AIUK Regional Organisers - Clara is advocating for Scotland to be one of the pilot regions and will seek input from other Scottish Groups to the application process over the next week or so.
- (c) **AIUK Local Group Updates – February** link [here](#). Some of the items included in the Update are:-

- /Refugee Week will be celebrated from **June 16–22, 2025** with the theme “**Community as a Superpower**”, focusing on the power of community, collaboration, and shared humanity in the face of displacement. /
- *Country co-ordinator vacancies - The update lists a range of country co-ordinator volunteer positions that are open for application.*
- *AIUK is also recruiting for a number of regional co-ordinator vacancies, including a post for Scotland. Nomination deadline is April.*
- /New online courses - Gender Justice and Human Rights (online); Activism Skills Training: Digital Campaign Strategy (23rd Sept). /
- **5th/6th July - AIUK AGM** - new location Warwick Uni
- **AIUK Priority Campaigns** [here](#); **Amnesty training courses:** **Activist Education**; & Updates from various local AI Groups across the UK

11. Next meeting – Thursday 10th April 7.30pm – 9pm



2025 Meeting Dates

New Members very welcome!

The Group meets every second Thursday of each month at **7.30pm - 9pm.**

The meetings take place at **Woodlands Methodist Church**, 229 Woodlands Road, G3 6LW

For further information contact mail@glasgowwestamnesty.org.uk

- ~~Thursday 9th January 2025~~
- ~~Thursday 13th February 2025~~
- ~~Thursday 13th March 2025~~
- Thursday 10th April 2025
- Thursday 8th May 2025
- Thursday 12th June 2025
- Thursday 10th July 2025
- Thursday 14th August 2025
- Thursday 11th September 2025
- Thursday 9th October 2025
- Thursday 13th November 2025
- Thursday 11th December 2025

BETTER TO LIGHT A CANDLE THAN CURSE THE DARKNESS

