Activism Subcommittee

Saturday 12th May
10am – 4pm

Room F1
Human Rights Action Centre

Present:

Tom Chigbo (Vice Chair)
Jerry Allen (Board member)
Piper Booth (Student Action Network Committee rep)
Alexis Hatto (Regional Representatives)
Holly Shorey (Thematic Networks Representative)
Gemma Olive (Youth representative)

Staff attending:

Andy Hackman
Jeni Dixon
Sena Atici

Apologies:

Eilidh Douglas (Chair)
Kerry Moscogiuri (Staff)
Rhiannon Griffiths (Country Coordinators)
Dave Beynon (Individual member)
Bob Barron (Trade Union Network Rep)
**Item No. 1 Agenda Topic: Minutes and Matters Arising**

1.1 Introduction

Tom welcomed everyone to the meeting. Tom is chairing. Tom moved matters arising to the end of the meeting.

Everyone introduced themselves.

1.2 Minutes from the March ASC meeting

Minutes from previous meeting were approved with the following amendments

Updated to reflect that Jamie Wheeler Roberts is Country coordinator rep and not individual member.

1.3 Matters arising

ASC meeting outside London:

Jeni had done some research into costs – centred on holding a future ASC meeting in York – and reported that it would be only marginally more expensive based on travel and accommodations requirements for current ASC members.

Global Assembly Resolutions: Tom reported that The Board had fed back to International Board about Global assembly resolutions / proposed policies.
Item No. 2 Agenda Topic: Feedback from Constituencies

2.1 Networks – Holly Shorey

The main point was in relation to Women’s Action Network (WAN) committee concerns as they were not involved in planning the Women Making History Festival planned for 20th May at HRAC and only found out about the event when they saw promotion to the WAN. This was disappointing and raised concerns for all networks who felt anyone of them could have experienced the same lack of coordination and collaboration. Andy explained that this was down to poor communication by him to the staff team (he had asked to make sure WAN were involved, but the staff team had assumed this meant the event was to be promoted to the network rather than involving the committee in the planning and delivery of the event.

The Children’s Human Rights Network (CHRN) has drafted their letter to IS about lack of presence at Human Rights Council on Children’s Rights. This letter has been sent to Eilidh as per ASC’s request that this is coordinated through the Board. Waiting for response from Eilidh.

Successes: women panel at the AGM was a huge success and regarded by many as the highlight of the event.

CHRN: Progressing with work on citizenship campaign including videos with PRCBC, trade unions promoted through social media outlets.
Marsh awards Event on 19th May.

LGBTI network: very successful Trans Round Table hosted by the LGBTI committee at HRAC that has further strengthened their connections and networking opportunities.

Action:
Andy: to call Rachel and Melanie to apologise for poor communication and resulting lack of opportunities for collaboration around Women Making History Festival

Action: Tom to follow up with Eilidh re: the CHRN letter and get a response to CHRN Committee

Tom said that the way events are planned and organised and communications need to be looked at. Networks have plans for the year and we need to try and plan and implement existing events within their plans.

Jeni is trying to get network plans to be more visible around the office to facilitate that.

Andy apologised for the missed opportunity.

2.2 Feedback from the Country Coordinators - Tom fed back based on Rhiannon’s written report
Challenges: The latest CC survey had been presented to Senior Management team by CC chairs (outgoing and incoming). It indicated varying degrees of satisfaction of Country Coordinators with communications with staff teams and asked, outside of the Community Organising team, how do we improve communication with other staff teams and Country Coordinators?

Jeni has been aware of the issue and is working at trying to facilitate relationship building between Country Coordinators and staff teams as well as other activists.

ASC asked if there are particular opportunities for Coordinators to meet with staff?
Jeni answered: Country Coordinators had eg been trained alongside staff in the past and we can explore opportunities again as well as highlighting where good relationships between staff and country coordinators exist. Show what can be achieved if both parties worked together.

Issue of communication is recurring (referring to Networks communications).

Jeni noted that the new survey has separated out communications reporting across different staff teams so this issue may have existed before with the new format enabling us to see a breakdown of levels of satisfaction with comms with different staff teams.

Tom would like feedback from SMT to see what is going to happen next to improve communications with activists.

**Action:** Jeni / Andy to follow up with Kerry / SMT actions following the meeting with CC chairs and see how it can be improved.

South Asia issue:
Jerry said there are more issues than in the CC survey and report –
The team continues to send emails to the IS and Jerry acknowledged that since the appointment of new South Asia Director, there had been an improvement in responses at least

Jerry would like the SMT ~(Kerry) to get in touch with IS as he feels there is a lack of response from researchers and campaigners about the matter.

**2.2 Regional Reps Feedback - Alexis**
Alexis reported verbally and said he’d I send a written update

Last Regional Reps meeting was during AGM where they were joined by Student Actin Network Committee for part of it.
Rhiannon Griffiths from the Sheffield group gave a workshop on community partnering at the AGM which was well received.

Potential new reps for Wales – we think as a result of the AGM meeting with activists in Wales (facilitated by Jeni and Paddy Corrigan – Head of Nations) It was good to have the AGM in Swansea.

23rd June next Regional Reps meeting.

Alexis is presenting suggested next steps for the local group survey during steering committee on 23rd
He and Liesbeth have already presented it to staff and volunteers. They want to explore ways to include questions around age gender, ethnicity in next survey, and will be discussing more of this. Andy reported that staff teams are planning annual supporter survey so would be good to coordinate this work.

Alexis has some ongoing concerns about coordinating London group activities with street fundraising teams. They would like a networking day in London for street fundraisers to share feedback. A simple idea to connect messages more effectively could be to give Reps business cards to street fundraisers so they can give them out to general public.

**Action: Jeni to follow up and to also update local group details on Amnesty website (some pages out of date and need removing)**

Potential new group in London: City of London in Museum of London Tower Hamlet group would like to change their name to East London group. The group had already changed their name a year ago. Jeni pointed out that there is a cost to change names.

Alexis said: We don’t want new groups feeling excluded by bigger groups.

Tom thinks that the geography of groups shouldn’t necessarily be linked to the addresses of members rather than actions they are doing.

**Action: Andy to coordinate with Alexis and Liesbeth about plans for local group survey and wider supporter survey (potentially working with Ben Smith, Head of Data and insight who is keen to help).**

### 2.3 Student Action Network (StAN) feedback - Piper Booth

AGM experience was really good. The only complaint was about a comment on abortion during the women panel. It was Piper’s first AGM.

General ethos of the event was really good. Even people who had differences agreed that everyone did a great job.

Compared to feedback from previous years, this year was much better.

Turnout from student groups was lower than expected:

Freshers packs are progressing.

Scottish student groups have already handed over to their new committees

Freshers Fayres: The Freshers project has started which is designed to support new groups through a presence at freshers fayres and then support through the first meeting, StAN committee are hoping to support this.

Youth Power Action Summit: Julianne (Chair of StAN Committee) and James were in Kenya for summit for Young activists. Very good experience and James has reported they will have a detailed wrap up / review and report about this later.

**Action for Change: 25th June**
This is a training day for all new student group committees. All student groups being strongly encouraged to send someone from every committee.

Meeting next week to talk about content.  
**Action: Piper to use opportunity of Action for Change to promote AGM for next year.**

Jeni said it is easier to organise when we know deadlines the earliest possible.  
Jeni found it was very interesting to find out how many students were involved in other activist roles.

2.4 Youth Groups

Feedback from Youth Advisory Group (YAG) is good.

Gemma was unable to attend the AGM but reported from Anne that feedback from AGM from youth delegates was good. Youth delegates felt engaged and involved. Particular mention for Women’s panel.

Exam time so there won’t be a lot happening now.

Youth groups quite big on refugee week.

The next YAG meeting is in July and the ASC committee rep handover will happen at the September ASC.

Holly seconded that youth participation in AGM was good to see.

Jeni recommended ASC to look at the blog that was written by one the Youth members.

2.5 Trade Union Network Feedback - Bob Barron  
**Action: Tom to ask Bob if he can supply a written report.**

**Item No. 3 Agenda Topic: AGM Wrap Up**

**General:**
Tom asked all to consider a number questions about the AGM:

1. How did you personally feel after AGM?
2. Logistics: Space, venue, accessibility, paperwork, etc.
3. What worked well
4. What can be Improved
5. How can we improve attendance /reduce drop off?

**Reflections on how the event made people feel:**
Tom said it is important to think about our feelings because people tend to remember and associate feelings with an event / experience long after they forget the content /logistics etc. So it’s important to consider how people felt – and to consider how best to plan for and create positive feelings in future.
Generally there was a sense that people felt positive and enthusiastic.
There were some concerns eg videos not being shown.
People felt good to see a variety of different groups. Panels were really good.
Liked bilingual signage and other content.
Good sense of collaboration between staff and activists.
Some concern about logistics of getting to Swansea but sense that event logistics generally ran smoothly.

**Logistics:** Space, venue, accessibility, paperwork, etc.

Space and venue worked very well (although Swansea difficult to get to for some).
Some reflections that the ‘New to AGM introduction’ session was missed by some because it started early, and people were coming from different locations. This was because there was direction that student meeting and new to AGM meeting shouldn’t clash – suggested that ASC should suggest what to prioritise in future.
Some reflections that font size for written text on agenda (and on screens) was too small to read for some people (in working parties and plenary).

Took a while to figure out which room code related to which room for workshops / working parties.

**What worked well**

photo session on the beach with students was a highlight.
Action centre and the Brave panel were very good.

Workshops generally well planned and well received. Changes to the length of workshops as well as clearer workshop descriptions worked well. Reflection that could show good examples of good practice on social media for activists (at least one workshop could have been fitted) Congrats to all workshop leads.

Congratulations also to the people who organised the Friday night icebreaker event.

+ The Marsh awards and good news were high energy and uplifting to start Sunday session. Could be more of that sort of tone?

**What can be improved:**

Consider producing summary of workshop content for people to have content for those workshops people are unable to attend.
Felt we could have done with more time on workshops and less time on working parties. This reflected the delegate feedback (from approx. 75 delegates out of 300+) which indicated that the attendees who completed the survey overwhelmingly wanted more time for workshops etc and that the time devoted to Governance / resolutions etc was ‘about right’.

Some reflections that the Women’s panel was a bit rushed and the panellists were so good that they could have had a panel each.

Agreed that time off is important especially for activists and staff who have a presence in several sessions.

How we can ensure the correct balance? How could we do more to showcase what activists are working on (eg Marsh Awards / Good News) Eg It would be interesting to have a map showing where the good news is happening and demonstrating the variety and reach. We could plan more...
effectively for this – make it more of a discussion amongst activists pre AGM so that they consider and prepare what good news to share etc.

Can we consider how to guard against unnecessary use of energy and maybe over catering? Eg. There was food wasted because more than 100 people who registered to attend didn’t attend. As this was first time outside of Nottingham for a long time it was harder to judge drop out rate but Events team will consider in future.

Suggestion that we could think about National Conference element as a ‘Human Rights Festival’ to emphasise positive, inclusive, upbeat and inspirational intent.

**Turnout:**

Out of over 500 people registered, over 100 didn’t attend.
No shows: Andy thinks has been happening more since it’s become free.
Suggestion that Tom we could set targets for the actual turnout in the room.

ASC discussed how each activist constituency could set targets and more effectively promote and encourage attendance to their constituencies.

We can adjust target according to venue capacity each year – and taking into account previous years drop out figures – as well as taking into account the legal requirement to enable members the ability to attend the AGM part of the event.

We should all highlight the importance and benefits to attending (to help address comment that there is some sense that eg local groups may be reluctant to pay for people to attend from their funds and we should reassure all activist constituencies that this a good investment)
We should also consider ways to emphasise that we need to know if people decide not to come including because it costs us money to cater for people etc etc)

Can we consider specifying the target audience / levels of knowledge / skills needed and ‘learning objectives’ / what people can expect to get out of workshops in the workshop descriptions?

**AGM discussion on Amnesty in Wales:**

Jeni said there was a good mix from regional reps, student groups, etc.
There was a really positive discussion.
One key suggestion was to have a Welsh speaking media spokesperson in Wales. Jeni has passed this onto the Media team, particularly re: RMSOs
Paddy reported that the discussion would be very useful research for plans to propose a Welsh office
Two people interested in vacant regional rep posts in Wales, they have spoken with Farshid.

Very good turnout and Paddy reported that he would use the session to help inform proposals for any staff in Wales.

**Action:** Alexis to update if he has heard from the two people interested in Regional Representative positions.
AGM review group:
Chair by Chair of AGM. Governance based committee, attended by standing orders, company secretary, director of CEO office, Student rep, ASC rep, Community Organising Manager (Jeni) Head of CORE (Andy) / Event Producer (events, logistics, practical side).

There was a suggestion that there is some overlap between ASC role in relation to the AGM and the role of the AGM Review Group role – although understood that Review Group should focus more on governance aspects.

Tom asked if there’s a reason why it is governance based and if there is a parallel group looking at other sides of things.

Andy suggested that what happens in practice is that both ASC and AGM review group feedback to board for decisions on AGM content, programme etc.

Action: Everyone to think about who can represent ASC at AGM review group.

AGM review group next meeting: 14th June

Andy to share AGM Review Group Terms of Ref with Tom. Tom to send email to ASC to encourage people to put themselves forward for the role.

Item No. 4: GDPR Update

Jeni fed back on GDPR activities.

We are well under way encouraging as many existing supporters as possible to opt in to ongoing communications. Tom pointed out that there was a pause as we had to change the wording on the creative designs for our communications after feedback from the IS.

Jeni reported that the number of activists getting in touch and asking about GDPR and compliance has been higher than expected which is very positive.

Alexis points out that some activists are very concerned on specifics and asked for pre-written statements Jeni explained that the reality was every group holds and uses data differently and so it’s better for them to write their own statements with the help of the guidance.

Jeni reported that all lead activists would shortly be receiving emails saying that they would continue to receive emails deemed necessary to perform their roles even if they opt out of other communications.

Any activist with any questions about GDPR should get in touch via the dedicated email address – dataprotection@amnesty.org.uk

Item No. 5: Feedback received on Local Groups/Regional Reps following the AGM (Tom Chigbo)

Tom reported that he had received a useful letter from David Rogers in response to discussions about groups / activism and engagement etc at the AGM.
David talks about the definition of group size in response to Group Survey feedback. He highlighted the need to focus on younger people in groups suggesting we should monitor age. He also pointed out the importance of Facebook and online presence/tools.

Tom thought this was helpful and would like to reply.

Jerry said that it is the same in the Wirksworth group. He would like to share this letter with his local group.

**Action:** Tom to share letter with Farshid and Jeni and Jeni and Farshid to feed into read the letter Tom’s response.

### Item No. Community Organising Risk Audit (Andy Hackman)

Following last meeting’s item on this Andy updated and shared that he and Jeni are working with Stephanie Lee (Internal Risk Auditer) as we increasingly adopt plans to empower and connect activists.

This will enable us to take a proactive approach to identifying and managing our risks.

Andy verbally shared a draft of the project proposal which is to be signed off by Stephanie and then Kerry so that this work can start in w/c 4th June.

Andy reported that we are hoping to complete it within three months of the start date.

Tom asked if doing this is going to delay anything in relation to Impact of Movement strategy Andy answered that it will not and that it the thinking behind Impact of Movement is already being adopted and so we should consider the audit as part of the ongoing work to ensure processes, strategies and requirements are in place to support us in the Impact of Movement work. We know that not all processes are in place at the moment and so we need to implement them.

**Action:** Kerry will approve the draft and Andy will send it to ASC / share at next ASC

### Item No. Training Plan (Andy Hackman)

Apologies from Shoomi who couldn’t make it.

Andy fed back from her presentation updating on the progress of the consultation into how to more effectively connect trainers to activists.

This can be for existing Amnesty Activists but also adults / partners outside of Amnesty structures.

**Strategies Applied so far:**
The number of trainers increased from 14 in March 2014 to 118 in May 2018
We have focussed on increasing the diversity of trainers: used to be recruited from existing Amnesty activists whereas now we consider everyone who has something to bring.
Trainers are more geographically spread.

**Findings:**
Activists would like all training delivered to be consolidated (and easy to access)
Regional Reps and StAN can play a more strategic role.
We want to focus on embedding culture of learning.
Local and student groups sometimes feel they are too small to ask for training. We should develop our website and make it easier for trainers and activists to communicate – and easier to find resources and find / contact trainers.

HRE and Community Organising should get together to collaborate on activist training.

**What can be done:**

- NationBuilder could be used to consolidate all training available for Activists.
- Quarterly Mailings from Regional Reps and StAN
- Social Media Promotion
- Defining purpose of events: populate them with relevant people and activities.

Alexis noted that resources are still hard to find and what action has been taken to make it easier to find them.

Action: Agreed that need to bring together HRE / trainers plans and associated resources together with training / upskilling / skills sharing required to empower more activists. Jeni / Andy to consider how with HRE team and others.

**Item No. Football Welcomes – Debrief (Andy Hackman)**

Andy presented on the success of the second year of Football Welcomes which has grown from a media opportunity into a programme of activities that we believe has real potential to grow very significantly.

In 2018 we focussed on using Football Welcomes to demonstrate how different communities through the UK can and are welcoming refugees by developing relationships with football clubs and local refugee organisations.

- 60 clubs compared to 30 last year.
- Support from artists, influencers, footballers
- 4 leagues
- Naomi researched a model used in in Germany whereby Football clubs, their fans / community fostering the idea of coming together. This is the model we are trying to adapt and implement here.

We are focusing on both national and regional media – viewing Football Welcomes as a means to generate and tell positive stories of communities working together to welcome refugees.

Alexis asked if there would be more engagement on Against Hate campaign.

Andy answered that we are likely to keep Football Welcomes focussed on I Welcome / refugees campaign for the foreseeable future – and are hoping that it will be a lasting legacy of the campaign.

Tom said that local groups are important in these campaigns as it provides a great opportunity for groups to reach out as part of a community – they are often better placed to do this than staff in London.

Tom also pointed out that there are good opportunities to develop the project further inc eg we can go as far as becoming Football league’s charity of the year?
**Item No. Q1 Feedback Report**

Tom introduced the quarterly Feedback report for January – March 2018 and highlighted the items in the summary and how it’s important to keep an activist eye on these reports.

Jeni pointed out that any staff member can log feedback in MASCOT and that activists can ask a staff member why your feedback hasn’t been logged.

Tom said that people should be aware that the Board looks at the reports too.

**Item No. Regional Media Support Officers (Jeni Dixon)**

Jeni reported on behalf of Ella Berny the Media Officer, responsible for supporting Regional Media Support Officers (RMSOs):

- The staff supporting RMSOs has changed to Ella Berny, Media Officer, and Farshid Talaghani, Community Organising.
- There are different interpretations of the role by people playing the role – and by other activists.
- We need to instil a better sense of ‘community’ and sense of being a part of the movement.
- Ella plans to create a survey to key staff to ask what they understand the RMSO role to be. ASC requested that all ASC members and all Regional Reps receive the survey too.
- Regions vary and London should be seen as a very different region when planning connections. There are lots of connections already happening.

Tom said that we need to think of an appropriate way to organise this work. He thinks understanding of the role is low.

**Action: Jeni to invite Ella Berny and Farshid Talaghani to the next ASC meeting.**

**Item No. Prides Update (Jeni Dixon)**

Jeni gave a short verbal report on work done to determine our focus for Prides this year.

Following Stonewall deciding not to take part in Pride in London this year – because it perceived a lack of action in response to criticism over levels of inclusivity and diversity at Pride in London

The Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Trans* and Intersex (LGBTI) Network worked with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff group and others to determine the approach we will take this year. Having talked to several organisations Jeni reported that there is no clear and united backing of Stonewall’s position and no consensus amongst organisations about the response by Pride in London on the issue of inclusivity and diversity. The Network, in consultation with staff groups and external organisations have decided that we increase our involvement and presence at more Prides, specifically Sparkle and Black Pride which will necessarily mean a reduction of investment in Pride in London, although we shall still have a presence.

The LGBTI network committee has been talking to various Prides across UK and there is a big enthusiasm from Prides to work with us and have our name associated.
Tom asked how we are communicating our response and concerns to Pride in London so that they are clear that we share some of the concerns about inclusivity and diversity and keen to see how Pride in London are addressing these concerns. Andy explained that the LGBTI network committee have been liaising with Pride in London who are aware of our concerns.

Jeni explained that we need to make sure that we too are being inclusive.

Piper noted that there were similar questions around Glasgow. We are hoping to apply the same idea nationwide.

**Item No. Impact of the Movement Strategy (Andy Hackman)**

Andy apologised for not having a completed final strategy paper for ASC and shared a presentation of progress on the Impact of Movement strategy to date and asked for ASC feedback on the proposed areas for focus and potential investment.

Andy recapped on research findings and insights to date.

Andy recapped on the external and internal contexts, the need to invest in both ‘mobilising and organising models’ in order to recruit and empower more activist leaders and connecting Communications strategy with impact of Movement strategy.

Andy shared draft areas to focus on and asked for ASC feedback:

1. **Training**: Individuals benefit from playing a role in Amnesty by learning and developing **Digital tools**: NationBuilder will be a central part of that, we need tools for activists to report their activities. Lead activist roles will have access to data on what is happening in their communities.
2. **Implement communications and brand strategies**: we should consider how we are communicating, being visible in communities. Communications team are working on materials we can use.
3. **Being visible and active in more diverse communities.**
4. **Review and clarify activist lead roles and relationship to each other**: Connecting people more effectively, support people, clarify relationships with them while identifying gaps as well.
5. **Review activity events and define purpose of all events**: Why are we doing the event, what do we want to achieve, connection between events.
6. **Invest in supporting Global Group on Activism projects**: Staff across the movement. Looking at models of activism, sharing that knowledge, how to pull that knowledge. Communications strategy: supporting the various projects that exist through the movement. Connecting activists around the world though the movement.
7. **Connect IoM and Key strategy**: communication, political, fundraising, people and culture.
8. **Relationship between IoM Fundraising strategies**: As we develop our strategy, it will be easier for our fundraiser to explain our goal to potential supporters thus getting funding more easily.
9. **Risk audit and mitigation strategy**: having an attitude towards risk. Spotting gaps and investing to fill those gaps.
Activity in pairs:
Do these feel right?
Are there any gaps?

Feedback from ASC:
Lots of positives Feels v big so needs breaking down into more defined projects – and draw out distinction between projects and vision / ideas.
Need to get balance right between joining with other strategies and being focussed on Impact of Movement so as not to lose focus
Not clear how most project will involve activists (and they need to)
Need to make explicit that this is for everyone – not just one part of Amnesty

Andy then proposed 5 areas for investment:

5 areas to invest in:
1. Regional Pilot: Staff post in strategical geographical position. To connect and empower more people in that area. Aligning with communications strategy. Three-year pilot. Offices and project, travelling for management.
4. Training/upskilling: through existing structures, buying staff in, including in Community Organising.
5. Temporary Support staff: roles review, events review, etc.

Activity in groups of three:
Are these the correct areas to focus investment?
How would you/your constituency benefit from investment in these areas?

Feedback:
They seem correct areas to focus investment. It would be beneficial for all groups.

Suggest focus on new audiences rather than new networks (as less constrained by existing structures)

A regional pilot would be very interesting and create meaningful actions, more enthusiasm and more people to work on something happening locally. A lead staff member in a region has the ability to bring together good things that are happening. A good way to make things happen.
NationBuilder is good to invest – esp as our current website doesn’t enable our activist to take action and be more involved.

Action: Andy to write up strategy and send it to ASC before taking it to the board.
Andy to work on the 10 projects and make it into more focused projects.

Tom asked if we are happy to go forward with the investment areas as soon as possible before the strategy is signed off.

Alexis was concerned by the potential for the need for additional investment in the future for NationBuilder to use for the whole organisation

Andy and Jeni explained that the current proposal from Nationbuilder doesn’t indicate that.
Tom asked if we would be happy to start using NationBuilder as soon as possible and ASC confirmed they would be.

AOB

Next meeting: 8th September 2018

Tom thanked Jerry for his great contribution to ASC as it is his last ASC meeting.