



Minutes of [Amnesty International Reading Group](#) Meeting

Thursday 8th February 2024

Chair: Anne McFarlane

This meeting was held via Zoom.

Welcome and introductions

7 people joined the meeting for some or all of it: Anne, Helen, Ruth, Iona, Sue, Liz, Vicky

- Apologies - Michael, Hilary

Speaker - as our speaker was unable to attend the meeting, we had a general catch up. We have re-booked Grainne for our meeting in September when she can catch us up the Troubles Bill and a general update on Northern Ireland.

1. Updates on:

- Hong Kong links and group theme
 - We have decided to have the human rights issues in Hong Kong, particularly campaigning for political prisoners, as our theme for the year at all events (except Pride). We have booked Paul Wong, Amnesty's Hong Kong country coordinator for our April meeting and have asked for his advice about our approach.
- Asylum Seekers and Refugees
 - Anne and Helen continue to attend the Central England Network's (CEN) meetings about a campaign for refugees, particularly looking at changing public opinion to be more positive. Amnesty's lead for refugees and asylum seekers, Steve Symonds, joined us to give a clear view on Amnesty's position - a new report is being published in February. [read the report here.](#)
 - We have decided to create a FAQs for campaigners and to create a letter for the MP representatives to send to their MPs, making human rights at the heart of our message.
 - Helen is still working with the Exodus team - Issue 3 is now out - [read it here.](#) The team is getting together a website as a proper landing site for the magazine and a podcast to extend their work further.

2. Confirmed Events:

- Quiz – April. We had a good chat about the pros and cons of different venues and dates.
 - Further chat in the whatsapp group to finalise arrangements.
- Chance2Dance4Charity – Friday 17th May - BOOKED
- Waterfest – Saturday 8th June - AGREED
- Reading Pride – Saturday 31st August - AGREED
- Mulled Wine & Music – Saturday 7th December - BOOKED

3. Events for consideration:

- Wokingham Fayre – Monday 6th May
 - Helen to research further as this would be a good place to have a stall due to the large number of Hong Kongers in the Wokingham area.
- UoR Community Event – Saturday 18th May
 - this is still a maybe
- East Reading Festival – Saturday 23rd June
 - we agreed not to attend, as Liz's previous experience of campaigning at this event wasn't positive.
- Wokingham Pride – Saturday 13th July
 - unlikely due to capacity
- WOMAD – 26th to 28th July, Malmesbury
 - further chat required
- International Festival - HK political prisoners -
 - Helen to research speakers and venues
- street collection
 - possible in September due to capacity in March

AoB & monthly meeting schedule

Next meeting: Thursday 14th March @ 8pm. Lise Rossi. USA

April meeting - Amnesty's Hong Kong country coordinator