

Diss Amnesty Newsletter



Happy New Year to you all

A round-up of things we were involved with in 2023:

1. June 10 – Fundraising Gig at Dickleburgh

Pete Arnold, a local music teacher and band leader, brought his four-piece band "The Liberty Tree" to Dickleburgh Village Hall to entertain us and raise funds for Amnesty. The audience were very appreciative of the mixture of humour and protest in their original and traditional songs.

2. August 11 and 19 – Stall in Diss Focused on Information about Immigration

We set up our stall in Mere Street, first on a Friday, which is a market day, then on a Saturday. We had a leaflet/handout that answered questions such as "What is an Asylum Seeker?" and "What is the Illegal Migrations Bill?" We had much engagement, handing out leaflets, talking to people, and receiving donations in the yellow Amnesty bucket. Responses ranged from complete non-acceptance to very positive praise and support. Overall, we felt it was well worth it.



3. September 3 – Stall at the Annual Burston Rally

The Burston School Strike Rally commemorates the longest strike in history and celebrates the people who continue to fight for Trade Union rights, working-class education, democracy, and solidarity. Diss Amnesty Group usually has a stall there to support the ethos of the rally, raise funds for Amnesty International UK, and promote Amnesty's work. This year we sold many books donated to us by local people and second-hand bookshops, including the Amnesty bookshop in Norwich. We also sold Amnesty's Trade Union section T-shirts and tote bags, as well as many knitted items created by Jackie Gooch, an active and very long-standing member of the Diss Amnesty steering group.



4. November 17 – Stall at the Charities Fair at the United Reformed Church

We took Amnesty International's annual Write for Rights campaign to the URC's Charities Fair, along with Jackie's craft work to sell.

Several cards were written to people suggested by Amnesty International HQ to support them in their cause, captivity, or oppression. Physical post has proved tremendously helpful to the recipients. Amnesty groups across the UK also write, resulting in large quantities of support.



5. November 25 – Write for Rights Stall at the Green Party National Action Day in Harleston

We approached the local GP organisers to set up our Write for Rights table at their National Action day. They were very welcoming, and we had an opportunity to introduce ourselves and the W4R campaign. We made connections with people and raised Diss Amnesty's profile.



6. December 9 – Stall at the Methodist Church Mistletoe Fayre

A good vehicle to sell craft items made by Jackie G and Jane H. These items raise a good amount to enable the group with their actions and campaigns but also to send money at year-end for the work of Amnesty UK. Everyone who bought an item knew that it was for Amnesty's work.



7. December 11 and 18 – Write for Rights Stall in the Corn Hall Cafe

We approached Diss Corn Hall with the idea that we bring our Write for Rights table to their Cafe, and the Corn Hall very generously agreed to host us. We had very good feedback, with many people coming to support the campaign, enjoy the cafe, and write cards. People appreciated having the space and time that the cafe provided to quietly sit and think about who to write to and what to say.



8. December 25 – Present – Initiative for Sunday Gatherings/Vigils in Diss

One of our steering group members independently started Sunday gatherings/vigils in Diss to make a public stand calling for an immediate ceasefire in Israel-Palestine. We have supported these gatherings, often attending ourselves, and offered the use of Amnesty placards.



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Because of all these activities, we have been able to donate £400 to Amnesty International.

Best wishes,

Diss Amnesty Steering Group