**Amnesty Kent Network newsletter May 2025**

Dear Kent Network members and supporters

**HIGHLIGHTS**

Welcome to our May newsletter.  There are lots of things that you can do to support human rights this month, including

* **Join this Tuesday’s speaker meeting** to find out more about Amnesty’s work on **Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory**
* **Support** one or more of our upcoming **Refugee Week** activities to promote the rights of **refugees and people seeking asylum**
* **Volunteer to join us** at one of this year’s **Pride events,** starting with **Canterbury** on **7 June**
* **Join the mass lobby of MPs** in Parliamenton **21 May** to **oppose cuts to social security for disabled people.**
* **Volunteer** to **lobby** your **local MP**
* **Book a place** at this year’s **AGM** and **National Conference** on **5-6 July**
* **Apply to join the Committee** of the **Children’s Human Rights Network**
* **Complete the survey** on the **training and education needs** of Amnesty activists
* **Participate** in any of the **other events advertised below**

**SPEAKER MEETING THIS TUESDAY: ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY**

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**Join us this Tuesday 20 May at 7:30pm** when Jack Farrar and Mariam Torres, Amnesty UK’s **Country Coordinators for Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory** will be joining us to talk about their work. **Email** [**mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk**](mailto:mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk) **for a link**.

Since 2022, **Amnesty has been calling for an** **end to Israeli apartheid** and the racist regime of oppressive laws, policies, and practices designed to stifle and deny the humanity of Palestinians. Despite the existence of multiple international human rights statutes and international humanitarian law designed to prevent war crimes and crimes against humanity like apartheid, the international community has failed to hold Israel accountable. **The UK Government is no exception, despite claiming to be a champion of the ‘rule of law’**.

On Nakba Day (15 May), Amnesty launched the next phase of its End Israeli Apartheid campaign. **It has asked for the support of local activists, including the Kent Network**. By December 2025, it wants as many MPs as possible to call publicly for a **UK ban on the import of Israeli settlement goods** to end to the UK’s trade and business complicity in illegal settlements in the West Bank, a key feature of Israel’s system of apartheid. Through our Kent Network Core Team, **we shall be aiming to reach as many of our local MPs as possible** to support this initiative, so please look out for more about this.

A group of people standing around a table

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On May 3, at their annual stall at St. Leonard's Street Market, **our Hastings team collected 102 signatures** from residents of the two local parliamentary constituencies calling on both MPs to press the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary to **demand an impartial and independent investigation into the killings of paramedics and rescue workers in Gaza** and **the lifting of the blockade on humanitarian aid**.

**REFUGEES AND ASYLUM**

**A group of young people holding signs

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**Refugee Week 2025 is on 16-22 June. We shall have a stall at Faversham Market on 14 June** to promote refugee and asylum rights. **If you would like to help, please email Annabelle at** [**annabelle\_clayton@hotmail.co.uk**](mailto:annabelle_clayton@hotmail.co.uk).

We hope to be promoting the same messages at a stall at the **Community EID in Gravesham** on **15 June. If you would like to help us there, please email Victoria at** [**victoria.gascoine@btinternet.com**](mailto:victoria.gascoine@btinternet.com)**.**

Then, on **21 June**, we shall be doing the same with a stall at the **Dover Multicultural Festival. To help us there, please email Martin at** [**martin3769@hotmail.com**](mailto:martin3769@hotmail.com)**.**

On **25 June from 7:00pm to 8:30pm**, Amnesty’s Central England Network will host an online event: "**Immigration Detention in the UK: what’s going on?”** [**You can register here**](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/r3zGn8PKTUW1QaZH1uNr7Q#/registration).

[**Amnesty has criticised**](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/uk-government-plan-return-hubs-harmful-distraction)the UK Government’s plan to begin talks with other countries on “return hubs” for people whose asylum applications have been refused as a **harmful distraction**, calling on it to **face its responsibilities** and **stop trying to push them onto other countries.**

**PRIDE**

**A group of people holding signs

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**This year, we hope to participate in several Pride events across our area**. The first will be in **Canterbury on 7 June**. We need more volunteers! **If you can support our presence there, please** **email Ambareen at** [**af681@kent.ac.uk**](mailto:af681@kent.ac.uk)**.**

[Amnesty’s 2025 Pride Pack is now available on the website](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/2025-04/Pride%20pack%202025.pdf?VersionId=RymlVrCKrcQ3AX6d7t3L_Soeog9wkx6I) and can be used as a resource for Pride events. The pack features **actions and information to support Amnesty activists**, including information on **how to order resources for a march or stall**. The lead action this year centres on the kind of discourse media outlets are propagating around the rights of people who are trans. The pack has a petition, but there is also an action card, which is included in the resource pages at the back of the pack.

Last month, the UK Supreme Court made a ruling about protections under the Equalities Act based on sex and to whom they apply. **Amnesty has described the ruling as disappointing and frustrating**, adding that it will cause a lot of uncertainty for a lot of people. Amnesty’s initial response to the ruling can be found [here](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/uk-supreme-court-outcome-disappointing-court-affirms-right-trans-people-protection?utm_content=161515&utm_campaign=MCFR1427S_LG_MM_April_25&utm_medium=email&utm_source=amnestyuk#:~:text=%E2%80%9CAmnesty%20intervened%20in%20this%20case,safety%2C%20health%20and%20family%20life.).

**DISABLED PEOPLES’ RIGHTS**

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Amnesty’s Disabled People’s Human Rights Network is organising **a mass lobby of MPs in Parliament on 21 May from 1pm to 4pm.**  The plan is that Amnesty activists will go to Parliament and each will request a meeting with their MP to talk about Amnesty’s opposition to cuts to social security for disabled people. If you would like to attend but are unsure of what to say, or if you would like a buddy to join you, you are invited to go to the Amnesty UK office at 12:30pm on the day and to travel to Westminster with Holly, the community organiser supporting the Disabled People’s Human Rights Network. **For information contact** [**holly.harrison-mullane@amnesty.org.uk**](mailto:holly.harrison-mullane@amnesty.org.uk)

**REACHING MORE LOCAL MPs**

**Members of our Ashford team will meet their MP Sojan Joseph on 6 June.** This follows his response to the letter that they sent to him congratulating him on his election and calling on him to use his position publicly to promote and defend human rights. **If you would like to help us to build a link with your local MP, please email me.**

**ANTI-RACISM: CRIME PREDICTING TECHNOLOGY**

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On 3 June from 10:30 to 12:30 at The Cultureplex, 1-10 Keeley Street, London WC2B 4BA, Amnesty UK’s Racial Justice Director, Ilyas Nagdee, will deliver a keynote talk, [**Who is presumed guilty?**](https://email.amnestyuk.org.uk/c/12ApLhiGnR7ymHhJoMNQmMZ0WarO), where he will analyse the impact of Government developments in the area of “pre-crime”, including the use of ‘crime predicting’ technology by police. For more on this, read Amnesty’s recent report on [Automated Racism](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/2025-02/Automated%20Racism%20Report%20-%20Amnesty%20International%20UK%20-%202025.pdf?VersionId=JqCcTODw37yAXyINmAY6uAzrKEWucFF7) or watch Ilyas’s recent presentation to the United Nations [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=atKbmEA9fLc).

**On 4 June at 6:30pm to 8:00pm**, we shall hold our fourth roundtable conversation about the **Prevent Duty** at Nucleus Arts Centre & Café Nucleus, 272 High Street, Chatham, ME4 4BP.  Email [graham.minter@amnesty.org.uk](mailto:graham.minter@amnesty.org.uk) for details. For more about the Prevent Duty, see [here](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/prevent).

**SOCIAL SECURITY IN THE UK: STOP THE CUTS!**

**A person and a child holding hands

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On 8 May, Amnesty launched a new report: [Social Insecurity: The Devastating Human Rights Impact of Social Security Failures in the UK](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/resources/social-insecurity-report?utm_content=161515&utm_campaign=MCFR1427S_LG_MM_April_25&utm_medium=email&utm_source=amnestyuk). The report uncovers the difficult realities faced by people receiving social security payments in the UK and the harmful impact on their human rights when they don’t receive adequate support. It shows clear evidence **that the UK falls well below international standards** and includes **Amnesty’s recommendations to change the system**. You can read media coverage of the campaign in the [Big Issue](https://www.bigissue.com/news/social-justice/dwp-benefits-system-human-rights-amnestry/?_gl=1*1risfmf*_up*MQ..*_ga*MTIzNjA0MzQ0LjE3NDYwMDg4NzE.*_ga_MS0M3VN168*MTc0NjAwODg3MC4xLjEuMTc0NjAwODkxNi4xNC4wLjA.) and [Birmingham Mail](https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/newsbirmingham/dwp-could-be-forced-to-stop-plans-for-benefits-cuts-after-damning-amnesty-report/ar-AA1DAuKp?ocid=BingNewsVerp) here.

**THE NIGER DELTA: ‘CLEAN UP, PAY UP’**

**A group of people holding signs

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Action outside the courts in February 2025 in support of Niger Delta communities fight for justice against Shell.

copyright M-A Ventoura/AIUK.

On 8 May at the Royal Courts of Justice, there began a trial over responsibility for damage caused by **oil spills which impacted a large area of land belonging to the Bodo Community** in the Niger Delta. Facing trial is Renaissance, an oil company to which Shell recently sold its stake in onshore oil extraction in Nigeria. That day, Amnesty activists joined Justice 4 Nigeria (J4N) outside the Courts to **show solidarity with the Bodo Community** and **demonstrate evidence of levels of pollution in Bodo**. Read more [here](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/niger-delta?utm_content=161515&utm_campaign=MCFR1427S_LG_MM_April_25&utm_medium=email&utm_source=amnestyuk).

**HONG KONG**

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[Article 23](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/uk-campaigners-call-prime-minister-protect-activists-uk-long-arm-hong-kong-law?utm_content=161515&utm_campaign=MCFR1427S_LG_MM_April_25&utm_medium=email&utm_source=amnestyuk) is an article of Hong Kong law designed to **intimidate and silence Hong Kong activists, journalists and students** and stifle all criticism of the Chinese and Hong Kong authorities and their policies, both within the city and globally.  To mark the 1st anniversary of Article 23, Amnesty co-signed a joint letter to the Prime Minster Keir Starmer, together with 7 UK-based exiled and wanted Hong Kong activists and 20 organisations and diaspora community groups, calling on the **UK government to step up protection for activists at risk**.

Amnesty is supporting an Archiving exhibition, "**Ways of Remembering**" hosted by Hong Kong Action Archive, taking place from 17 May to 26 May 2025 at Hoxton Arches, Arch 402 Cremer St, London in London. As a side event, **Amnesty is organising a panel discussion:** **why archiving matters to diaspora communities** with archivists from various diaspora communities on **24 May from 6pm to 8pm**. [**Book here**](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/global-archivists-sharing-why-archiving-matters-to-diaspora-communities-tickets-1349778125709?aff=odcleoeventsincollection&keep_tld=1).

**AMPLIFY SUMMIT**

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**Amnesty UK’s AGM and National Conference will take place on 5 and 6 July 2025 at the University of Warwick**. The event combines AIUK’s Annual General Meeting and a host of workshops, opportunities to meet other activists, learn about key campaigns and time to celebrate our achievements as a movement. **Attendance is free for all Amnesty members and activists**.

Sessions will include:

* The impact of US policy on global human rights
* Activism for Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories
* Tools for activist wellbeing
* Creative stunts and public action
* Working with young people and schools
* Building local power

AGM business will cover:

* Resolutions, debate and voting
* Reports on the impact of Amnesty’s work
* AIUK Board Q&A

Other activities will include:

* A drop-in creative space to get crafty, collaborate and create something you can take home
* Meet with representatives from across the activist structures in the Activism Village
* Communal lunch and dinner
* Evening fun!

[You can book here](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/amnesty-amplify-summit-agm-national-conference-registration-1234724587479?aff=LGM2). If you need accommodation on campus, you can [book this directly with the university](https://email.amnestyuk.org.uk/c/12zURuQBwLZel5KVAbR91qsvIV6J). The deadline for booking accommodation is 6 June.

**CHILDREN’S HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK**

The [**Children's Human Rights Network**](https://www.instagram.com/amnestyukchildren/?hl=en) is an activist led group of over 7,500, steered by a committee of up to 12 activists who live all across the UK and who aim to work together to drive forward change on Children's Human Rights issues in the UK and around the world. Current activity includes a Network-led campaign to **ensure access by all children and young people to Human Rights Education in schools** and support for Amnesty’s campaign to **Scrap the Prevent duty** because of its impact in undermining children’s rights**.**

**The Network are looking for new members for their committee** - particularly young people, those with expertise in children’s rights, teachers - as they seek to upscale their work to champion children’s rights. Please apply through [this link](https://amnestyuk.wufoo.com/forms/childrens-human-rights-network-recruitment/). The deadline is 25 May.

**TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AND SURVEY**

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**On 21 June**, Amnesty is offering a training day on **Human Rights Education in Your Activism** to help activists to learn how to deliver and champion impactful, participatory education and training on human rights. The aim of the training is to give activists the tools to feel more confident delivering education and training to adults, activists, students or young people, or to support others to feel confident to do so. **The training day will be held at Lift, 45 White Lion Street London N1 9PW from 10am to 4pm**. Reasonable expenses will be covered. [Sign up here](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/human-rights-education-in-your-activism-tickets-1302032226439?aff=oddtdtcreator).

Amnesty UK has launched a **consultation survey** on activists’ training and education needs. We encourage you to complete it to help to make training and education better. The survey is [here](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/education-training-consultation-2025).

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**Tuesday 20 May at 7:30pm to 8:30pm.  Kent Network online speaker meeting: Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Email**[**mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk**](mailto:mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk)**for a link.**

**Wednesday 21 May at 1:00pm to 4:00pm. Disabled Peoples’ Human Rights Network mass MP lobby at the Houses of Parliament. Contact** [**holly.harrison-mullane@amnesty.org.uk**](mailto:holly.harrison-mullane@amnesty.org.uk)

**Monday 2 June at 7:30pm to 9:00pm.  Maidstone, Medway and Swale Group meeting at Maidstone Community Support Centre, 39-48 Marsham Street, Maidstone, ME14 1HH.  Email**[**mmands.amnestygroup@gmail.com**](mailto:mmands.amnestygroup@gmail.com)**for details.**

**Tuesday 3 June at 10:30am to 12:30pm at The Cultureplex, 1-10 Keeley Street, London WC2B 4BA. Keynote talk by Amnesty UK’s Racial Justice Director, Ilyas Nagdee: “Who is presumed guilty?”**

**Wednesday 4 June at 6:30pm to 8:00pm.  Roundtable conversation about the Prevent Duty at Nucleus Arts Centre & Café Nucleus, 272 High Street, Chatham, ME4 4BP.  Email**[**graham.minter@amnesty.org.uk**](mailto:graham.minter@amnesty.org.uk)**for details.**

**Wednesday 4 June at 1pm to 3pm. Monthly Guantanamo vigil outside Houses of Parliament. Email** [**mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk**](mailto:mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk) **for details.**

**Friday 6 June at 2:00pm to 3:00pm. Ashford constituents meet Ashford MP.**

**Saturday 7 June. Canterbury Pride. To join us there, email Ambareen at** [**af681@kent.ac.uk**](mailto:af681@kent.ac.uk)

**Saturday 14 June. Faversham market stall for Refugee Week. To get involved, email Annabelle at** [**annabelle\_clayton@hotmail.co.uk**](mailto:annabelle_clayton@hotmail.co.uk)**.**

**Sunday 15 June. Gravesham Eid Community MELA. For details, email** [**victoria.gascoine@btinternet.com**](mailto:victoria.gascoine@btinternet.com)**.**

**Saturday 21 June. Stall at Dover Multicultural Festival. For details, email Martin at** [**martin3769@hotmail.com**](mailto:martin3769@hotmail.com)**.**

**Saturday 21 June at 10:00am to 4:00pm. Training: "Human Rights Education in Your Activism Day ".** [**Tickets here**](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/human-rights-education-in-your-activism-tickets-1302032226439?aff=oddtdtcreator)

**Wednesday 25 June 7:00pm - 8:30pm - Central England Network Online Event: "Immigration Detention in the UK: what’s going on?”** [**Register here**](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/r3zGn8PKTUW1QaZH1uNr7Q#/registration)

**Saturday 5 July to Sunday 6 July.  Amnesty UK National Conference and AGM at Warwick University.**[**Tickets here**](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/amnesty-amplify-summit-agm-national-conference-registration-1234724587479?aff=LGM)**.**



[**Amnesty has called for an independent and impartial investigation**](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/israelopt-killings-paramedics-and-rescue-workers-gaza-must-be-investigated) into the circumstances in which at least 15 Palestinian medics and rescue workers, who went to southern Gaza for a rescue operation, were shot dead after Israeli forces opened fire on their vehicles.  Amnesty reiterated its calls for **independent monitors** to be granted immediate access to the occupied Gaza Strip.

**THE PREVENT DUTY**

**A person surrounded by surveillance cameras

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We have already held three round-table conversations in Medway to raise awareness of the ways in which the Prevent Duty acts to violate our human rights and to share views about how this should be addressed.  Amnesty has recommended that the Duty be scrapped.  **Our next round-table conversation will be in Medway on 4 June**.  If you would like to join this, please email me.

Meanwhile, if you would like to learn more about the Prevent Duty, you can **take Amnesty’s online course**.   This short course will enable you to understand what the Prevent duty is, the harms done to communities by Prevent, how it infringes on human rights, and understand what Amnesty has found as part of its research into Prevent.  **The link to the course is**[**here**](https://academy.amnesty.org/learn/courses/384/dont-prevent-rights-protect-them-an-introduction-to-the-governments-prevent-duty).

**ANTI-RACISM**

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The Central England Network are holding an online session on 29 April about **tackling anti-racism education**.  [Register here](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/ewsLGrNNThqN0veIvLQ9LA#/registration).

**PRIDES**

A group of people marching in a parade

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The number of Pride celebrations taking place across our area continues to grow.  Our Network aims to be present at as many of these as our resources permit.  **If you would like to join us as at a Pride celebration near you, or further afield, please email**[**mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk**](mailto:mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk).

**REFUGEES AND ASYLUM**



The Government’s Border Security, Asylum and Immigration Bill continues its passage through parliament.  Having passed its 1st and 2nd readings and the Committee Stage, it has now reached the Report Stage, for which several proposed amendments have been tabled.   Thank you to those who have written to their MPs to share Amnesty’s recommendations for a fair and efficient asylum system.  **If your MP has replied and shown interest in continuing a dialogue, please let me know**.  We can provide advice on this.

**SOCIAL SECURITY IN THE UK**

A person and a child holding hands

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The UK Government has announced **more cuts to social security**, continuing over a decade of decisions that have crushed the systems that people rely on to stay afloat.  Since 2010, social security has been chipped away bit by bit.  Now the same political choices are being made again.  These are choices that will hit the most marginalised hardest and push more people into crisis.

On **Thursday 8 May at 6:30pm**, Amnesty will host an event to present its **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 it is violated, it impacts so many of our other rights
* Why poverty is a political choice and what can be done about it

The event will take place in Manchester but **you can join it online.   Register**[**here**](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/how-social-security-in-the-uk-erodes-human-rights-and-dignity-free-event-tickets-1303976150769?aff=oddtdtcreator).

Meanwhile, you can **sign and share Amnesty’s new action calling on the Prime Minister to stop the cuts**to social security in this country and build a fair, compassionate system that protects everyone**:**[**Prime Minister: Stop the Cuts**](https://email.amnestyuk.org.uk/c/12y0EERIXqfiGWp2cOOFBVzPrPNu)

**AHMED AL-DOUSH**



On 31 August 2024, British citizen **Ahmed al-Doush was arrested while trying to return home to the UK** from Saudi Arabia after a family visit.  He was targeted by Saudi authorities over a social media post and an alleged link to a government critic.  Since then, he has been held in solitary confinement, denied legal representation for months and remains arbitrarily detained.  [**Ask the UK government to ensure his release**](https://email.amnestyuk.org.uk/c/12y0Gnej39hJCV2xHSh9oy5BXFm5)**.**[**Ask the Saudi authorities for his release**](https://email.amnestyuk.org.uk/c/12y0GCqocP9e2UQtlJUEdMrRKv0s).

**AGM AND NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2025**

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A reminder that **this will take place on 5-6 July 2025 at the University of Warwick**.  The event will bring AIUK members and activists together to learn, connect, scrutinise, inspire and   celebrate, as  well as taking part in Amnesty UK decision-making and planning for the year ahead.  In addition to AGM business, the Conference will feature a range of workshops, panel sessions and networking opportunities.

**Attendance at the event is free.   Advance booking is recommended.**[**Tickets are available here**](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/amnesty-amplify-summit-agm-national-conference-registration-1234724587479?aff=LGM).

**HOW TO BUILD COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

A group of hands holding each other

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Amnesty are holding another **online training session on How to Build Community Partnerships on 22 April from 6:00pm to 8:00pm**.  The aim of these sessions is to help local activist groups or teams to deepen their connection to their local communities, to work with other organisations to strengthen our campaigning and to understand the importance of collective action and solidarity.   **You can sign up to the training**[**here**](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/how-to-build-community-partnerships-including-mapping-tickets-1302114923789?aff=oddtdtcreator&_gl=1%2A92blp5%2A_up%2AMQ..%2A_ga%2AMzAzNzM0MjAzLjE3NDMwMDM3MzE.%2A_ga_TQVES5V6SH%2AMTc0MzAwMzczMC4xLjEuMTc0MzAwMzg2MS4wLjAuMA..).

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**Tuesday 15 April at 7:30pm to 8:30pm.  Kent Network online speaker meeting about the work of Amnesty UK’s activist-led UN Network.  Email**[**mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk**](mailto:mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk)**for a link.**

**Tuesday 22 April at 6:00pm to 8:00pm.  Online training session on How to Build Community Partnerships.  Sign up**[**here**](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/how-to-build-community-partnerships-including-mapping-tickets-1302114923789?aff=oddtdtcreator&_gl=1%2A92blp5%2A_up%2AMQ..%2A_ga%2AMzAzNzM0MjAzLjE3NDMwMDM3MzE.%2A_ga_TQVES5V6SH%2AMTc0MzAwMzczMC4xLjEuMTc0MzAwMzg2MS4wLjAuMA..)**.**

**Wednesday 7 May at 1:00pm to 3:00pm  Monthly Guantanamo Vigil at Parliament Square, London.  All welcome.  Email**[**Mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk**](mailto:Mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk)**for more details.**

**Thursday 8 May at 6:30pm.  Presentation of Amnesty report on social security in the UK online or in person in Manchester.  Register**[**here**](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/how-social-security-in-the-uk-erodes-human-rights-and-dignity-free-event-tickets-1303976150769?aff=oddtdtcreator)**.**

**Monday 12 May at 7:30pm.  Maidstone, Medway and Swale Group meeting at Maidstone Community Support Centre, 39-48 Marsham Street, Maidstone, ME14 1HH.  Email**[**mmands.amnestygroup@gmail.com**](mailto:mmands.amnestygroup@gmail.com)**for details.**

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All the best

Graham