



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

Thursday 12th June 2025 - *This meeting was held on Zoom*

Chair: Helen

### Welcome and introduction

10 people joined the meeting tonight: Vicky, Helen, Iona, Sue, Ian, Ilaria, Gueth, Paula, Hilary, Liz

Apologies – Blanca, Anne, Ruth

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### Group Updates:

- Last month's speaker Ilyas Nagdee, Amnesty UK's lead on the Racial Justice Campaign had talked about encouraging local groups to engage with our local councillors on the subject of Prevent. There was a link to a [Template Letter to Councillors](#) and Gueth had sent an email to her MP
- **Webinar Immigration Detention in the UK: What's going on?**
  - 52 had attended - it was good to note 1/5 were from Reading Group.
  - [Link to watch the video](#) Passcode: a6J5i+eg
  - Iona gave positive feedback, mentioning the effect the video of former inmate of Campsfield, shown at the webinar had had on her.
- **Coalition to Keep Campsfield Closed (CKCC):** Rally on 22<sup>nd</sup> June for Refugee Week - information [here](#)
- **Refugee Week 2025:** Reading Refugee Group have organised a film showing and other local events [link](#)
- **Hong Kong vigil at Forbury Gardens for Tiananmen Square 36th Anniversary on 1<sup>st</sup> June:** Helen, Liz, Hilary, Paula & Anne attended, and Helen was one of the speakers. Local Hong Kongers were keen to sign the current petition for Chow Hang-tung – please sign it [here](#)

## Group Business:

- **Afghan Women Campaign**

- Helen gave an update on where we are with local MP, Liv Bailey. She has agreed to hand in a petition from her constituents, so we'll manage that on the stall.
- Hilary mentioned the Amnesty International online petition [link](#) and asked for another petition to be considered, that she felt would be more pertinent to Amnesty. The group discussed what points might be included:
  - *Safe Routes* - agreed
  - *Funding* - the group felt this may dissuade people from signing
- Speakers are being confirmed for our webinar in early autumn

- **Cuba**

- Sue had urgent actions for two prisoners - a copy and paste letter is included in the [link](#). Send a letter rather than an email to the Cuban Embassy in the UK.
- Human Rights Watch Report 2025 [link](#) and summary is also included with insights into what's happening in Cuba.

- **Reading Pride**

- Iona said the [Pride Pack](#) has come through and Mus has done 2x posters. The 3 campaign issues are
  - Trans discourse in the UK, postcard aimed at the BBC – this is the same as last year
  - A call for Conversion therapy to be banned in the UK
  - Decriminalisation of public association with LGBT+ community
- Amnesty are pushing the rainbow wristbands which can be ordered [online](#) or they can be picked up at Reading Pride
- Helen has reached out to Basingstoke Pride and booked it - date for diaries 16th August
- Gueth made contact with Windsor & Eaton Pride; however, the 20th September was not a date the group could make happen this year, so will research for 2026

- **Group Action from Amnesty HQ**

- Campaign to Ban the Importing of Israeli Settlement goods to the UK - [link](#)
- Please email your MP - See attached letters you can email

- **Letter writing sessions:**

By way of having a regular presence in the local community letter writing sessions in three locations were agreed by the group: Woodley Library, Pangbourne Library and Reading Biscuit Factory – dates to follow

- **Reading Water Fest: Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> June** Volunteers have been sent their rotas – will resend with notes for the campaign nearer to the event
- **Chance to Dance:** Next date is 12th September
- **Sponsored walk:** Has been postponed

### **Motions for AGM - group discussion**

- Helen explained voting process, focusing on the 10 group votes
- 3 motions had been chosen to discuss in detail
  1. Belarus - Agreed
  2. Israel – sanctions & boycotts - agreed but would officially Abstain because Board unable to agree
  5. Real lives cases - Agreed

The group would also Abstain on the complaints motion, but would otherwise vote Agree where the Board agrees

- **Anti-death penalty, South East Asia, Türkiye, UAE - our prisoners of conscience, Ahmed Mansoor & Dr Mohammed al-Roken** - no updates this month

### **Our Group's confirmed Upcoming Events:**

<b>Event</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Waterfest	Saturday 28th June, daytime	Forbury Gardens/Abbey Ruins
Basingstoke Pride	Saturday 16th August daytime	War Memorial Park
Reading Pride	Saturday 30th August, daytime	Kings Meadow
Chance to Dance	12th September	Peppard Memorial Hall Peppard Common

Barn Dance with the Scamping Rogues	Saturday 15th November 7.30pm	St Michael's church - booking details to follow
Write for Rights	Thursday 11th December, 7.30-9.00pm	Reading Biscuit Factory

Other events likely to be planned in

- International Festival - October/November

#### Other Amnesty or local upcoming events:

Event	Dates	Venue
National Conference and AGM	5th/6th July	Warwick uni
Regional Conference	11th October	TBC

**Next meeting:** Thursday 12th July 2025

Zoom at 8pm

Speaker meeting – Freedom of Speech and the Right to Protest - Tom Southerden,  
Amnesty's programme director for Law & Human Rights  
AND the Group AGM

[ZOOM Link](#)

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