



Amnesty International UK

June 2025

News from the Minehead Group



www.amnesty.org.uk/minehead www.facebook.com/amnestyminehead Instagram: @amnestyminehead

Actions you can take this month:

- ✓ **Sign the petition** about **Afghanistan** calling on the international community to take unified and stronger actions to urgently establish a robust accountability mechanism to hold the Taliban accountable for human rights abuses. Under Taliban rule, the country remains a hotbed of unchecked and unabated human rights abuses – gender persecution, torture, arbitrary detentions, and censorship – all with zero accountability. Find the petition here: https://www.amnesty.org/en/petition/break-the-silence-end-human-rights-violations-in-afghanistan/?utm_source=chatgpt.com
- ✓ **Support** AIUK's continuing campaign to **ban Israeli settlement goods** in the UK. AIUK is pushing for the state to take responsibility and end the UK's trade and business complicity in illegal settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem – a key feature of Israel's system of apartheid. **Write to your MP** about the Early Day Motion which was tabled on 14 May but signed by only 33 MPs so far. See the EDM at <https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/63644>
- ✓ **Join us** in **Refugee Week 2025** for a **Bring & Share supper** at Susan's home in Carhampton on 16 June at 6pm. Jenny Gateau will update us on the work of the Minehead Refugee Support Group and of Refugee Aid from Taunton (RAFT). All welcome but please let Susan know in advance that you are coming.
- ✓ **Check your diary** and see if you could help us at our **stall** with Amnesty-themed games at the Roadwater Fete on the afternoon of 26 July. Let Susan or Cherry know if you can help.

News from our group

We held a successful **letter writing afternoon** on 14 April at the Beach Hotel, when seven of us wrote over 30 letters to the relevant authorities about cases of current concern. Again, Peter supplied the stamps, saving us a lot of money in postage. Thanks to him and to everyone who helped. Here's a photo. The sharp-eyed amongst you will spot our member Karen Mills who was taking a break from her travels and managed to pop along to see us and write a few letters!



In April Cherry attended a very enlightening talk hosted by Taunton Amnesty group given by the AIUK Country Coordinator for the Balkans, Ulrike Schmidt, about the **Roma people**. It was shocking to hear that Roma people, who originally came to Europe from India in the Middle Ages, have been discriminated against for so long and are still denied basic human rights. During the Holocaust it is estimated that around 500,000 Roma people were killed in what was essentially a genocide. Since then, they have been denied a proper education, allocated the worst housing, and subjected to

abuse and hate speech. Around 12 million Roma live in Europe, of whom about half are in EU member states. Yet despite EU laws prohibiting discrimination based on race or ethnicity, Roma people face daily racism. Amnesty is calling on the EU to hold governments to account and end discrimination against the Roma people.



Diary Dates

We aim to meet or take action approximately once a month. All are welcome to join us.

16-20 June

Refugee Week
Bring & Share Supper in Carhampton on Monday 16 June at 6pm. For more info phone 01643 821209.

5-6 July

AIUK AGM & Conference at the University of Warwick. Details on AIUK website.

Sat 26 July

Stall at Roadwater Fete
Afternoon – set up by 1300. Help needed!

Sat 16 August

AmnesTea in Susan's garden in Carhampton 1500 to 1700.

Southwest Regional Network

Cherry and Susan are working with a group of other Amnesty activists in the Southwest on plans for a network, to enhance activism and awareness about human rights issues in the region. This will be a new way of working and is a response to the fact that the number and membership of local groups is decreasing. We hope it will draw in a wide range of people of all ages and backgrounds who care about human rights, including existing Amnesty members (who may or may not be active in a local group), members of other like-minded organisations and individuals who are not members of any particular organisation but would like to be involved in a movement for positive change. Two other areas (Kent and Central England) have successfully established networks so they will be our model. Activities organised across the region, both in person and online, will be publicised in a regular newsletter, so more people can join in. Another advantage will be access to more MPs. There will be more information soon, so watch out for an email from AIUK.

Supporting Refugees

Jenny Gateau reports: We have been busy contacting our many refugee friends in Taunton, Wellington and Bridgwater and, for Easter, we sent all the families a card and £10 to spend on an Easter treat. Through Refugee Aid from Taunton (RAFT) we have supported some pupils who could not start their school places for lack of uniforms, by making an emergency collection from our local supporters. Thanks to them, seven children are now in school. Now we are looking for sewing machines (portable and in working order). The many mums needing one are on a list, and I recently took one to the Thursday Group who meet in the Taunton Meeting House (1030 till 1200) and witnessed firsthand the sheer delight of a young recipient! We also need wool and crochet hooks urgently (but not knitting needles apparently!) Again, these can be dropped off at the Meeting House, or at my house. Similarly, do you have a spare wheeled suitcase you no longer use? When an asylum seeker gets 'Leave to Remain' after many months of waiting, they have to leave their accommodation and have no way to move their belongings other than black plastic bags.

As you know, we are sadly not able to do holidays anymore but instead are planning a '**Day By The Sea**' for a few families during the school holidays. For this we shall need some helpers to meet and greet and who are happy to do beach activities and picnic or, in case of inclement weather, indoor artistic fun and games. Ice cream treats will also be needed! Please email me or phone 01643 708471 to volunteer or for more information. I will be able to choose a suitable date when I have some idea of what help is available. We have generously been offered a grant towards such a day by AIUK, as part of their support for Refugees.

Campaign News

Kashmir: *Cherry writes:* The widespread coverage of the militant attack on a group of Indian tourists in Indian-administered Kashmir, that resulted in 26 deaths, has focused on the risk of outright war between the two nuclear-armed countries, India and Pakistan. However, there has been little mention of the impact on the lives and human rights of local Kashmiris who are reportedly being heavily targeted by the Indian authorities because of the attack. The Indian government is said to have given the military a free hand to 'bring the situation under control'. This has meant bulldozing and/or bombing of the homes of anyone suspected of having links with the militants, however flimsy the evidence. Whole villages are said to have been affected, with neighbours warned not to assist anyone whose home has been destroyed by the authorities. Huge numbers of individuals are reported to have been picked up, detained, tortured and sometimes killed. Things are very tense.



How to contact the Minehead Amnesty International Local Group:

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Email: amnestyminehead@gmail.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/amnestyminehead
Instagram: [@amnestyminehead](https://www.instagram.com/amnestyminehead)

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