

ASC/Nov18/01



Activism Subcommittee MINUTES

**Saturday 8th September
10am – 4pm**

**Room F1
Human Rights Action Centre
17-25 New Inn Yard, London, EC2A 3EA**

Present:

Tom Chigbo (Chair)
Piper Booth (Student Action Network Committee Representative)
Alexis Hatto (Regional Representatives)
Holly Shorey (Thematic Networks Representative)
Gemma Olive (Youth representative)
Rhianon Griffiths (Country Coordinator Representative)
Maddy Stanford (Youth Representative)
Daren Nair (AIUK Board representative)
Eilidh Douglas (Vice Chair of the AIUK Section Board)

Staff attending:

Andy Hackman (Head of Community Organising, HRE and Events)
Kerry Moscogiuri (Director of Supporter Campaigning and Communications)

Apologies:

Dave Beynon (Individual member)
Bob Barron (Trade Union Network Rep)

Item No. 1 Agenda Topic: Minutes and Matters Arising

1.1 Introduction

Tom welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1.2 Minutes from the March ASC meeting

Minutes from previous meeting were approved. Kerry will now arrange for the minutes to be posted on the website as final.

Item No. 2 Agenda Topic: Introductions and being Amnesty

ASC members introduced themselves to each other, each reflecting on a time that they felt that they were 'being Amnesty'. Examples included:

- the first time I was being Amnesty was my first AGM and got up to speak to the conference
- taking part in the IS latest human rights education online learning course. I spoke about human rights means to me and was a great privilege.
- helping a group with their meet Amnesty and responding effectively to a heckler, questioning that young people care at all about human rights.
- campaigning for Nazanin and experiencing the power of the Amnesty brand
- as a Student, arranging for a protest in Parliament Square which got really good media coverage and I've kept a snippet from the Independent.
- when my school won the Marsh Awards, we invited primary schools over to our school, because I helped my teacher organise it, I felt really part of it. I was chief photographer and took the photo with 800 people at the end.
- Action for Change conference was the first time we had organised an event ourselves and we had great feedback.
- the people really make it good, the Children's Human Rights Network really like working together, we are a good team and enjoy it which I can see has given us success with our campaigning.
- taking part in an action when we had to wear bright orange jumpsuits and did a big photoshoot with us lying in the shape of the Amnesty logo. I had to talk about Gbay and Amnesty all day to everyone and felt like I was Amnesty because I was talking in my own words and doing it myself. Helped me take ownership of the wider work that Amnesty does.
- doing 2 podcast shows in Edinburgh Playhouse, giving people a sense of togetherness and inclusion and fun - two buzzy occasions, brought really influential voices on a very diverse and inclusive bill providing people with a platform.
- Saudi women driving stunt,

Item No 3: Regional Reps Update and Youth Update

Regional reps - Report from Alexis Hatto

We have welcomed a new regional rep for Wales.

The regional reps had a very good meeting with Ben Smith to start planning the groups survey

The reps are planning a national pub quiz event for Feb next year – first time this has been done for a number of years

Lambeth Group are planning an Embassy Crawl - go to an Embassy, listen to a speech, deliver a letter, taking place on the 29th September

6th October – London-wide street collection

13th Oct – Scotland Regional Conference

Early Dec - North West Regional Conference - to take place in Preston

Interested to hear about what the plans are across the country and from the office for the 70th anniversary of the UDHR

NE region are planning a UDHR activity - hoping to get members of the local groups to read out parts of the UDHR at the same time, building on the coordinated photo action last year.

Need to update the website on the regional conferences' information

Action: Andy

Youth Update - Report from Gemma Olive

Despite summer holidays a lot has happened e.g. #familiestogether and the Trump visit when a lot of people attended the protests. Young people liked the boldness of the banner on Vauxhall Bridge and there were creative responses to protesting Trump from young activists. The not for sale campaign, run by the CHRN, was also engaging over the summer. It was simple and easy to take part in.

The impact of social media over the holidays is important because it opens up the opportunity to remain engaged over the holidays – video especially. The Colin Kaepernick video which is good, Also, the Secret Policeman podcast with artists which engage young people.

Daren asked a question about the risk of GDPR to young people getting involved. Maddie reported that in her experience, school groups use the same social media policies as the school.

Daren asked where we live streamed SP podcast. Daren said that older members tend to be on FB and younger members on Insta, and Twitter covers both. Therefore, need to spread reach across those platforms.

Piper endorsed Gemma's point about the importance of social media to students and young people over the summer to retain engagement and to build relationships further when people have time over the summer.

Eilidh asked if these social media actions were planned over the summer or was it a happy accident. Andy answered that whilst these were all planned actions, they weren't explicitly planned to engage young people over the summer, so this was good learning.

Tom asked what is exciting to young people, in the IOM strategy. Gemma responded saying that the sense of togetherness is important, having yourself with a big group of people, would really help a young person.

And any challenges now - the recurring problem is the number of people involved - there can be a barrier of teachers not wanting to put on Amnesty events. Can we help young people with techniques to get teachers on board?

Action: Andy to take forward with the CORE team

Item No. 4: Impact of the Movement Strategy

Tom led a discussion on the draft Impact of the Movement Strategy. ASC members divided into groups to consider four key questions:

- Overall Reactions?
- Will this strategy help?
- Specific Feedback on the goals, outcomes, objectives and actions?
- Messages for the Board

Feedback on those questions was summarised by each group and fed back as follows:

4.1 Reactions

Daren fed back that as a local group activist, he likes the strategy and the reasoning behind it, especially from a diversity perspective. You need to help activists develop into leaders. Using Nationbuilder is good.

Daren said that in addition to the local group model we need something that gives a platform for individuals e.g. single-issue campaigners and people who come along and want to campaign for human rights but not necessarily be part of a group or feel that they belong to the local groups that exist now.

He gave the example of the Tower Hamlets as an example of a group which does not reflect the diversity of the community in which it is based, and he felt that might also be true for other London groups and throughout Amnesty. Daren suggested that as the local groups are an established model, it's hard for new people to come in and change things and so we need to also provide alternative ways of engaging and platforms for individual activists, for example the NICEF Children's Champions network and Greenpeace political lobbying network.

Rhiannon reflected that when she has attended regional conferences, she and others have been shocked about the number of individual members who haven't heard of their local groups and the

local groups are not always the right environment for everyone. When local groups don't give you what you want, we need to find alternative ways for people to engage with Amnesty.

Thematic networks are a valuable route - e.g. anti-death penalty network, Rhiannon's experience of being part of that has generated much more engagement than in her role as a CC

Maddie suggested that need to integrate groups in a matrix, looking at everything all together.

Eilidh suggested that there is scope for individual activists in some of the things in the strategy e.g. delivering training, APE, school speaker, also opportunity to run training on how to run a local campaign. She suggested we could and should offer that training to individuals as well as members of existing groups.

4.2 Is this going to help?

The strategy can help us develop a new model for what leadership in Amnesty really means - to gather and develop people to campaign for human rights.

This strategy can help because it can feel now like we are working around the faults in our own structure. We should be a default member of our local group even if we don't go to it and local groups should be welcoming.

Objective 7.1 in the strategy (Move from a mobilising model to a combined organising and mobilising model) should help address that sort of thing.

There will need to be support for local groups to develop their ability to welcome more people. Regional conferences and the skill shares are good opportunities to make change happen.

It is positive that this strategy gives us the language that we can communicate about the potential impact of the movement, but it will need more work on how to share and engage more widely so that it is more inclusive, diverse and appealing.

It is good to see the same drive in the same way that the IS has been decentralised.

Nationbuilder will really help – but it involves an additional challenge of asking people to take on a new platform

MEL framework will ultimately be the most effective tool to understanding how this will help and if it is helping when we implement it.

The worry is that we won't be able to do it - the implementation is key. There needs a lot of commitment from the board and senior staff and we need to see it happen.

From an activist point of view, we need to make the demands and lead.

It is a great way of showing activists that we do value you.

Eilidh said she was very enthusiastic about it now coming together, having spent the last 2 AGMs talking about it.

In terms of changing culture - activists, and the young ones in particular are at the forefront of changing culture and making change happen.

So, other newly motivated trained people will draw people in - we can't wait for all groups to change culture.

Let's do it not just talk about it.

It needs to give a platform for individual activists.

There are a lot of issues outside of the groups control. Also having the resource in terms of staff members in order to coordinate and answer questions.

Andy responded saying that we need to re-focus the staff roles, the Comm Orgs, to reduce admin and focus on organising, facilitate more people to play roles in the movement

4.3 Specific Feedback on the Goals, outcomes, objectives and actions

On the CC section change 'led' to 'contributed' to 'we believe it contributing to' in the part about buddying

Move amnesty closer to the ground - we think the phrase is too vague and confusing for a wider audience.

When you refer to activists are you assuming they are all paid members? Clarify in the document what we mean by activists? Kerry confirmed that we mean all people campaigning with Amnesty, they don't need to be paying members.

Do you have benchmarks - are you comparing ourselves to other orgs in the UK doing the same thing and where we stand? Kerry and Andy talked about the work that we had done with New Citizenship Project at the start and the 'test and learn' approach to implementing the strategy.

It was suggested that we could we include some UK examples in the section on other community organising examples? Tom suggested an example from Citizens UK.

It was suggested that we should focus on local Councils and City Assemblies as well as MPs

It was suggested that we should look at how other organisations produce merchandise that can be sold e.g. cook books and there was positive feedback about the idea of yellow flip flops and wellies for festivals.

Avoid acronyms – or have a glossary

Can we have some merch? E.g. yellow flip flops and wellies

The youth section should talk about not only increasing youth participation but also the quality of the participation 7.3.2 - improve 'volume and quality'

7.2.2 - reflect that rights holders play a part in deciding the priority campaign

People don't like the term rights holders - what can we use instead? Add in a definition

Add a bullet point about 'groups being encouraged to build relationships with rights holders locally' and seek testimony where relevant

Add in something about making the code of conduct more accessible and emphasising the point about welcome

7.3 (Build a larger, more visible, diverse and inclusive Amnesty movement in the UK) sits as an objective that overarches the rest of the strategy. As written, it risks it being siloed away from the rest e.g. pilots should mesh. Need a venn diagramme or something... to join it all up.

Include a sentence upfront which says that the objectives and activities are mutually supportive e.g. diversity and pilots and later do a diagram.

4.4 Messages for the board

We support the strategy

We want it resourced and we want it taken seriously

Make sure it is delivered!

Take resource requirements seriously, don't avoid, if we are going to do things that are radical and big, we need to put radical and big resources to it

This gives you a basis to stand on - the sense of community and communication between activists

We would like a specific timeline for KPIs

Get started asap on the youth strategy

We want it resourced and we want it taken seriously

Something for us as board members to have more leadership that this is something that is followed through

Don't lose sight of the fact that this is an activist-led strategy - it will be quite difficult with some activist groups

We are up for it as ASC we are interested in defining it and making it work so please give us your backing

At the beginning is the PB quote - suggest we put the whole quote in there and name it as this is what our founder said.

Look again at the code of conduct

Hope that it will be approved by the board.

Future meetings of the ASC will return to this. It is crucial to the work programme

Next Steps

Please talk to your constituencies with lots of love and enthusiasm - reassure people that all this is about is strengthening the movement

Tom offered support to people with that if needed.

Item No 5. Updates from the Children's Human Rights Network and LGBTI network

Report from Holly Shorey:

5.1 Children's Human Rights Network

The children's network is running the child citizenship campaign, and the petition is online with 19K signatures. They are also doing a council action and many councils are passing the motion. One of them is Harrow and appearing in the local media. We also have a motion going to the TUC and there will be a fringe session with Shane, Lisa and Holly and a rep from the partner union NASUWT and Amanda Weston representing PRCBC (legal partner). We also produced videos and a day of action with the STAN. Senna has published a speaker toolkit on this campaign and the speaker network will be able to use this. This is all very positive, and the campaign has achieved a great level of engagement.

On the negative side – there have been some issues with staff and our campaign, in particular communications around use of the videos and the overall media plan. The videos developed by the network and partners were shared by AIUK without permission from the network which undermines the network and their relationship with partners. These issues have been sorted out now, but it was damaging at the time and important to learn lessons from this on how we work together as activists and staff.

We need better channels of communication and processes to enable collaboration and cultural change to develop more effective partnership working between staff and activists.

Kerry suggested that we should do a review of how it worked across CISC and ASC to help us learn lessons from this?

Action: Kerry and Andy to work with the CHRN to set this up

November 2019 is the 30th anniversary of the UNCRC. The network is aiming to do an event every month and have developed an advocacy plan towards option protocol 3 with the general preface of making rights real.

The network has been working extensively on youth engagement to make this youth led – we've been to lots of events to make those connections and are planning to go to Scotland, NI and Wales

The network has also been working with Nicky from publishing team on a book about children's rights

The network is working on a Child Takeover Day at the HRAC. The plan is to get a lot of children into the building on a weekday, talking to lots of different teams, working with Anne Montague (Youth Community Organiser) for a collaborative event.

Holly to share the year plans for all the networks with Andy so we can incorporate into organisational planning

Action: Holly

5.2 LGBTI Network

We are coming to the end of PRIDE season. We have been present at over 35 Prides with a good presence at Sparkle and UK Black Prides.

The 'I am who I say I am campaign' has been well received.

The network wants to grow their capacity and so going to the board with a proposal for expanding the network committee to 10 people which is very positive, shows how much they are growing.

ASC were very impressed with the report. There is a lot going on.

Daren asked about resource sharing across the networks and suggested that more joint campaigning is good. Holly replied that It is always on the radar for the committees and said that if a network is reaching the point when you are running own conferences independently that's even better.

Item No.7 Risk Audit Update

Andy reported that Stephanie Lee (Head of Internal Auditing) has conducted a piece of work working with the Community Organising Team and other relevant staff members looking at the current processes, procedures and control measures we have in place. The work is designed to identify and mitigate the risks associated with implementing the Impact of Movement strategy and Stephanie has produced a draft audit report highlighted the observed risks and indicating suggested remedial measures we need to put in place to facilitate implementing the strategy.

The audit has identified a number of risks that need mitigating under the following headings:

Strategy and Planning

Structure and Oversight

Communications

Monitoring and Reporting

Action: Andy and Kerry will respond to the audit with an action plan to fill agreed gaps and mitigate identified risks. The report will then go to Finance and Risk Sub Committee (FARSC) and then to board.

Item 8. Lunch

Item No.9 StAN & Trade Union Network Update

No report from TUNC as Bob unable to attend.

Highlights for StAN:

Relatively quiet period due to summer hols.

Action for Change has been a big focus – and a highlight.

Stan slightly disappointed at turnout compared to numbers of people signed up as there was quite significant drop off / no-shows (50%) particularly from people who signed up from London.

Brilliant feedback scores (average 9.3 out of 10)

Lots opportunities identified and lessons to learn:

- Look at timing (currently quite far into student holidays)
- Build on approach of making more participative and discussion-based.

Tom asked if any stand-out elements and Piper identified keynote speaker (Stanford Scott from Monitoring Project), and workshop on inclusivity (in response to student requests).

ASC also explored whether Action for Change could be used to facilitate student groups building annual campaign / 'networked moments' that could serve to help connect all student groups as well as achieve human rights impact. **Action: Piper to explore with StAN and James**

James Farndon's (Community Organiser Students) support much appreciated.

Freshers project:

StAN have identified a number of universities to target to try and establish Amnesty groups as part of the project – as well as identifying existing struggling groups that may appreciate support from StAN.

International Day of Youth???

Worked with Children's Human Rights Network to promote Citizenship campaign??

StAN and promoted and achieved good engagement as a result – especially as a result of w support from AIUK digital channels.

All above identified how StAN would appreciate training on e.g. building effective campaigns, developing leaders etc.

Action: Andy to talk to team about supporting

Item No. 10 Update on Events review: AH

Andy reported that we will continue work started looking at ensuring we are clear about the purpose of all our activist events – and how /whether they support and relate to each other and how they support the delivery of the strategic plan. This may require bringing in resource to support the work.

The Objectives of Impact of Movement strategy will again provide the context and we will review all events to ensure we are clear about how they support delivery of this strategy.

Tom emphasised the importance of the need to consult (and be seen to) all relevant lead activist s to ascertain their needs and perspectives.

Tom also suggested developing a tiered approach to the events we invest in and develop along lines of:

1. Have to do
2. Should do
3. Would be nice to do

ASC also talked about need to try new events and approaches and to be innovative and creative in approaching this work.

In this context Daren talked about the need to consider live streaming and other technology that could help participation and inclusion.

Action: Andy to take forward review in context of Impact of Movement strategy

Item No. 11 WAN & Country Coordinators (and Anti-Death Penalty Project) Update

CCs have requested ASC publish meeting dates and dates for feedback earlier as it's quite difficult for CCs to coordinate feedback – and more difficult when dates are not clear and accessible.

The main focus of CCs feedback was a general frustration with communications and this was most keenly felt in relation to the ongoing and worsening situation in the S Asia region. The team has now got to the point of seriously considering whether or not we should continue to focus on this region. This led to a discussion in ASC about the process for deciding countries and regions to focus on and question about who decides on this.

Action: Andy to work with Kerry and IS to try to resolve / come back to CCs with something substantial regarding ongoing S Asia region issues.

Action: ASC to agree and publicise future meeting dates and feedback deadlines

Other news and highlights:

- Rhiannon Griffiths (Japan) reports a high level of engagement with a recent creative action, which is in collaboration with the Anti-Death Penalty Project at AIUK. Around 40 local groups have

requested the tags used in the action, with over 1,100 individual tags being sent out. Local groups have also made their own. The action will be delivered to the Japanese embassy on World Day Against the Death Penalty, 10th October. Mike Quinn thanked for great support.

- The North Africa team notes successes with the Shawkan photo exhibition, which has been opened by local MPs four times (Exeter, Brentford, York, Cambridge), and at one event sent over 20 letters with 250+ signatures. A larger exhibition is now planned in Edinburgh for October.
- Jerry Allen notes the India section/IS office is doing a great job, with two new IAR cases, excellent materials, and Skype meetings being arranged.

Item No. 12 Training Update

Andy reported that following the evaluation of how we more effectively connect trainers with activists (presented at previous ASC), the CORE team are working with other relevant teams (notably Advocacy, Media and Comms teams) to consider how we design, present and promote the various education and training products we offer more coherently. This will be considered in the context of the Impact of the Movement strategy and we will develop plans over the next few months.

Item No. 13 Supporter Survey and Activist Communications

- Andy reported that Ben Smith had attended the Regional Reps meeting where they discussed plans for the next local group survey. Ben and Andy have subsequently shared the plans for this survey with other staff teams who are planning an annual supporter survey so that we consider all planned research and surveys in a shared context.

The relevant staff teams are meeting in late Sept to scope out plans the various planned research and Andy will ensure all activist plans and research opportunities are discussed as part of this.

- **Action: Andy to report back to next ASC on Sept research meeting and next steps**

Item No. 14 AGM Review Plans – Chris Moss

Following discussion at previous ASC meeting (and a call for an ASC rep on the AGM group) and a realisation that there was a possible duplication / confusion of roles in relation the AGM.

Chris Moss (AGM chair) joined the meeting to discuss the AGM Review Group, its relationship with ASC and to introduce plans to review the role of the AGM Review group – and more broadly to review how we need to evolve the AGM / National Conference and asked ASC to consider, “What are the most important questions that the AGM Review Group need to consider as part of the review and specifically to get a deeper understanding of:

- Why do people go?
- What are they getting out of it?
- How is it perceived by wider membership?”

ASC discussed, and suggested AGM Review Group considered 5 strands of work in the context of the Impact of Movement strategy:

1. Current turnout (numbers) and how to improve drop off rates (“no shows”)
2. How we increase the attendance
3. How we improve participation and engagement (when at the venue)
4. How to improve diversity and inclusion
5. Consider the balance between ‘governance’ and ‘conference/Human Rights Festival elements’

Action: Chris to share ASC thoughts with AGM Review Group

Action: ASC to email Tom if they want to be ASC rep on AGM Review Group

Action: ASC to consult their constituencies and suggest ideas for workshops / any other thoughts for 2019 AGM