

Watford Amnesty Group

March/April 2016 newsletter



2016 diary dates

Thanks to everyone who came to the planning meeting earlier this month or who sent in ideas in advance. 2016 looks like being a busy and exciting year for the group – but we need your help to make it happen!

We've tried to arrange meetings in different venues and on different days of the week to make it easier for people to attend. Hope to see you there!

You are welcome to just turn up to any of these events, and to bring friends, but if you want to know more or to let us know you're coming, use the contacts below.

These are all the ideas we've had so far, but if you have ideas for topics, speakers or activities, please let us know.



Monday 21 March 2016, 8-9.30pm – Training in lobbying

Pick up some skills and build confidence in lobbying MPs and getting our voices heard. Human rights expert Debora Singer will be coming to run this workshop, and they'll be a chance to take the latest Amnesty actions. All are welcome, whether you are experienced lobbyist or new to campaigning. We hope to put our skills into practice and meet Watford MP Richard Harrington in April about the Human Rights Act.
St Mary's church hall, Watford WD18 0EG

Friday 9 and Saturday 10 April 2016 – Amnesty UK annual conference and AGM

Find out more: www.amnesty.org.uk/national-conference-agm-2016
East Midlands conference centre, Nottingham

Wednesday 18 May, 8-9.30pm – Human rights in Saudi Arabia

Paul Dawson, Amnesty's Saudi Arabia co-ordinator will be discussing human rights and UK arms sales in Saudi Arabia. We'll find out what Amnesty is doing to stand up for the people of Saudi Arabia and how we can help.

Reason coffee shop, Watford, WD17 1BD



Saturday 18 June – campaign stall at Croxley Revels

This is our regular stall, selling jams and chutneys and encouraging people to sign petitions, at a friendly, community event.

Croxley Green, 1-5pm



August, date and venue TBC – campaign stall at Herts Pride

Taking action for the human rights of LGBT+ people and chatting to festival-goers about Amnesty. We hope to follow up our presence at Herts Pride with a speaker from Uganda in September on LGBT+ rights.

Saturday 15 October – street collection in Rickmansworth

Thursday 13 October, 8-10pm – AGM and children’s rights in conflict

Eilidh MacPherson, head of campaigns at the charity War Child, will be speaking.

Reason coffee shop, Watford, WD17 1BD



December, date and venue TBC – Greeting card campaign letter-writing and Christmas social

Good news from Amnesty!



Albert Woodfox was the longest-serving isolated prisoner in the US, kept almost continuously in a tiny cell for an astonishing 43 years by authorities in the state of Louisiana. On Friday 19 February, he was suddenly released.

Albert had entered solitary confinement aged just 26 and now, as a 69-year-old man, he was allowed to leave isolation and prison altogether. Justice is long overdue but it has finally been served.

'Although I was looking forward to proving my innocence at a new trial, concerns about my health and my age have caused me to resolve this case now and obtain my release with this no-contest plea to lesser charges. I hope the events of today will bring closure to many.' Albert Woodfox, on his release on 19 February 2016.

You can send Albert a message here: www.amnesty.org.uk/albert-woodfox-free-louisiana-usa-after-43-years-solitary-confinement-us

And there's loads more success stories here: www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2015/12/50-ways-you-changed-lives-in-2015/

Contact details

Visit our website: www.amnesty.org.uk/groups/watford

Find us on Facebook and Twitter: www.facebook.com/groups/watfordamnestyinternational and @WatfordAmnesty

Would you like to join the group or pay subs (£6 per individual, £10 per family)?

Contact membership secretary Monique Jowers on 01923 774 621 or jowerscroxley@gmail.com

Do you have an enquiry about the group website, publicity ideas or an enthusiasm for social media? Contact Mark Nicholas on marknicholas999@hotmail.com

Do you have items for the newsletter, ideas for future meetings or activities, or other enquiries? Contact Sarah Hagger-Holt on sarahhaggerholt@gmail.com or 07761 660 370