

MAY 2017 NEWSLETTER

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**OPEN MEETING
MONDAY 22 May 2017
THE OLD LAUNDRY
STOCKWELL GARDENS ESTATE
20 EASTCOTE ROAD, LONDON SW9 9BY
12.00 pm to 2.30 pm**

DIGITAL INCLUSION AND OLDER PEOPLE

Access to relevant information ensures that older people can obtain the services and benefits they require. It also keeps people connected to social, leisure, volunteering, community activities and employment opportunities. They become socially included. We live in a digital age and the digital default agenda is pushing more and more services on line. This is making it increasingly more difficult for older people who are unable to access the internet to procure the information and services that should be available to them. They lose out on opportunities for online savings, on purchases and bookings, on pursuing interests and events. Most importantly they are deprived of an easy means of contact with friends and that can alleviate loneliness,

Come and join in the debate on what the obstacles are to digital inclusion and why it is important that the needs of all older people to get on line if they so wish are met

Speaker: Sharon Tynan from Age UK

Please note the changed meeting date.

Do come prepared to bring in issues of relevance and interest which you would like to talk about in the accredited slot.

Raffle, tea, coffee and biscuits

MAY DAY RALLY.

Thank you to members who joined tens of thousands of people in the May Day march and rally. Speakers on Trafalgar Square brought and extended greetings and solidarity from workers around the country and the world. They spoke out strongly against the government's privatisation and Austerity agenda which has brought hardship to many and against Racism which is on the rise. Speakers condemned the attacks on the unemployed,

the disabled, refugees and migrants. They called for an end to the "Gagging Act" and the Welfare Reform and Housing Acts. They demanded proper funding of the NHS, Social Care, education, public services, decent jobs and secure homes for all.

CONSULTATIVE HEALTH CONFERENCE BETTER CARE BETTER HEALTH HEALTH CARE FOR THE ELDERLY

The 16th Health Conference Hosted by Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust and organised by LAMPAG will take place on Monday 19th June in the Governor's Hall at St Thomas' Hospital from 10.00 am to 3.00pm. As is customary, the morning session will be given over to two medical topics and the Trust panel. The afternoon session will cover a health topic of our choice. The full programme will appear in the June newsletter. Attendees are asked to make a donation of £3.

8 JUNE

The elections will be taking place in a climate of Austerity which has impacted on communities across the country. We have seen the NHS and Social Care plunged into crises, cuts to public services, education and public services funding, welfare benefits changes and zero hours contracts and pay freezes driving up poverty among the disabled and working people

As pensioners we have had our fair share of disrespect. Right wing politicians, think-tanks and media commentators say that pensioners have escaped austerity at the expense of the younger generation. We are told that we are living longer and that we are a drain on the economy with regard to health and social care costs, that we are "bed blockers " . There are plans to take away benefits such as the pension "triple lock, the bus pass and to means test the winter fuel allowance. These plans are another way of rolling back the welfare state. In reality the state pension is one of the lowest in Europe and in a country where the five richest families in the UK are wealthier than the bottom 20 percent of the entire country. One in six older people live below the poverty line and up to six million have an income of less than £11,000 a year. In the past five years over 141,000 pensioners have died from cold related illnesses. Research by the WRVS in March 2011 showed that older people contribute £40billion towards the economy above what they receive in pensions, care and benefits (estimated to rise to £75billion by 2030.). Pensioners are not valued for their contributions to their families, their communities and the economy. There needs to be a change in the way we structure our economy and distribute wealth.

The National Pensioners Convention's general election manifesto makes demands aimed at ensuring that all men and women, today's and future pensioners have dignity and security in retirement. (See enclosed and use to support your views).

"Don't raise your voice. Strengthen your argument". (Desmond Tutu.)

Diary date: Committee meeting Tuesday 30 May, Manor Court, 11am to 1pm.