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no births behind bars

NO BIRTHS BEHIND BARS: ENDING THE IMPRISONMENT OF PREGNANT WOMEN

PRISON will never be a safe place to be pregnant. In the last five years, two babies have died in women's prisons when their mothers were left to give birth in their cells without any pain relief or medical assistance. It is a matter of life and death that we end the cruel, barbaric practice of imprisoning pregnant women.

Level Up is campaigning for courts to stop sending pregnant women and new mothers to prison. Working with women who have been pregnant in prison, as well as midwifery and legal professionals, charities, academics – and a protest group of mums and babies called No Births Behind Bars – the campaign is already making changes to the system.

how it began

In 2019, Rianna Cleary went into labour alone at night in a prison cell. She called for help but prison officers ignored her. She gave birth alone and had to bite through the umbilical cord. Her baby, Aisha, died. In 2020, Louise Powell went into labour on a prison toilet. She was left screaming in pain for hours, and her baby Brooke was stillborn. In a parallel universe where we didn't imprison pregnant women, Rianna and Louise's daughters should both be starting school this year. It is our nation's shame that they are not.

There's plenty more evidence that prison will never be safe for pregnant women. Since these harrowing baby deaths, the NHS, Prison Ombudsman and Ministry of Justice have all declared that every pregnancy in prison is "high-risk". Pregnant women in prison are seven times more likely to suffer a stillbirth, and twice as likely to give birth prematurely, than women in the general population. For years academics and charities have called for healthcare reforms inside prison – but no amount of reforms can keep anyone safe when they're isolated behind locked doors and the keys are in the hands of a prison officer. In the words of Rianna Cleary, whose baby died: "When it comes to prison, what's written on a piece of paper is never what happens in practice. The way the prisons are run is all about power and control. They will never be caring places."

the courts must change

Pregnant women end up in prison because courts send them there – so Level Up have so far focused our campaign on the Sentencing Council, who oversee all sentencing policy in courts across England and Wales.

In 2022, Level Up teamed up with No Births Behind Bars to write an open letter to the Sentencing Council, which was signed by the UK's leading maternity professionals. The Royal College of Midwives support the campaign, saying "prison is no place for pregnant women",



and the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists have emphasised the need for non-custodial alternatives for pregnant women. We've also kept up momentum with media coverage in places like Sky News, Cosmopolitan, The Times and the BBC, and several very cute baby protests outside the Ministry of Justice and the Royal Courts of Justice.

As a result of this campaigning and media attention, the Sentencing Council has introduced a new 'mitigating factor' for pregnancy, which means that judges and magistrates must acknowledge the harm prison causes to pregnant women and mothers when making a decision on whether to send them there. The Sentencing Council will also be introducing new directions for courts to "avoid the possibility of an offender giving birth in prison."

While this new policy will affect women coming before the courts in future, there are still hundreds of pregnant women inside prisons now. The vast majority, if not all, of them are on sentences that should be served in the community. Level Up is increasingly involved in getting them out of prison by finding lawyers to appeal their sentences. In January this year, the Court of Appeal overturned a heavily pregnant woman's mandatory minimum sentence and replaced it with a suspended sentence. She was immediately released in order to give birth safely at home. In June, they again overturned another pregnant woman's sentence. The campaign is having a direct impact on women and babies' lives – and changing the law in the meantime.

the next steps

While we have successfully started to change sentencing practices, not all pregnant women in prison are there serving a sentence. In fact, the latest statistics show that a third of pregnant women are being held in pre-trial detention, or before their sentencing. The campaign will now focus on changing bail process-

es to ensure that pregnancy and motherhood is taken into consideration and pregnant women are kept in the community to ensure their child has the best start in life. Prison will never be the best start in a child's life.

get involved in the campaign to end the imprisonment of pregnant women

Polling has shown that the majority of the public don't want to see pregnant women and mothers sent to prison if a community alternative is available. If you agree, then please join the 12,000 people who have signed Level Up's petition.

BY JANEY STARLING
CO-DIRECTOR OF LEVEL UP
FIND OUT MORE AT WWW.WELEVELUP.ORG
OR HELLO@WELEVELUP.ORG

pram depot

PramDepot is an arts-led recycling project providing Baby Boxes filled with high quality recycled baby clothes and equipment to vulnerable new mums and their babies. We're based in Wood Green, North London, and deliver baby items to women across London.

The project started as an art exhibition, set up by artist Karen Whiteread in 2013. Filling a room with second-hand baby items donated by the local community, Karen invited people to bring what they didn't need and take what they or someone they knew needed. This living exhibition invoked an emotional response, inviting participants to reflect on the contradictions inherent in an over-consuming society, in which waste and deprivation

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stop imprisoning women survivors

THE UK criminal justice system imprisons twice as many women today, in 2024, than it did in the nineties, 30 years ago. There has been no increase in the quantity or gravity of female crime to justify this escalation. Harsh penal policy, directed towards tougher sentencing for men – who make up 96% of the prison population – seems simply to have carried women along with it. Yet, it is almost two decades since Baroness Corston recommended in her seminal Report that there should be: “a distinct radically different, visibly led, strategic, proportionate, holistic, woman-centred, integrated approach towards women in prison.”

That need for a different approach for women is even stronger today, as imprisonment increases while research shows that domestic and sexual abuse are often the drivers of women's offending. The Prison Reform Trust's (PRT) 2017 Report *There's a Reason We're in Trouble* found that 67% of women in prison had suffered abuse, with many in the grip of an abusive male, at the time of their offence. Some women were coerced into buying or delivering drugs, or into shoplifting to order. Many were convicted of stealing food – literally to survive when being starved of cash – or of stealing alcohol to self-medicate. Other women strike back, after years of abuse and are convicted of violence themselves and some are arrested when they have called the police, and manipulative perpetrators, who usually appear calmer, make counter-allegations.

One prisoner, Mary, told PRT that she was in an abusive relationship for three years. He had been convicted of assaulting her and, though she was a disqualified driver, threatened her family unless she drove him around to deliver drugs. The police stopped them and found cannabis, but Mary took the blame, together with admitting that she was driving whilst disqualified.

Another woman who spoke to PRT was Belinda. She has scars on her body from her ex-partner throwing boiling water over her and slashing her with broken glass. She suffers from ADHD and depression. He took her to a party, got drunk and tried to force himself on her, so she punched him to get away and left. He reported her to the police and got his friends to make statements against her. She was convicted of assaulting him.

A variant is that, frustrated by police incomprehension, a victim who has called them out, shouts at them or pushes them away. If a male officer takes hold of a female victim, it can cause a struggle, through a 'fight or flight' response, as she relives earlier male abuse. Offences such as these, committed against police officers, usually result in imprisonment.

Typically, women receive short sentences. But if this sounds merciful, that is the wrong conclusion. 53% are sen-



tenced to less than six months and another 17% to less than 12 months and all are released halfway through. Few courses/treatments to tackle complex needs are available on that brief time scale. Many programmes have been defunded and the remainder have entry queues far longer than the sentences themselves. That means that 70% of, often needy, women sent to prison are just warehoused, without getting any benefit or any new learning to set them up for a future.

For male prisoners, relationships can be a protective factor; children often stay with their mother and provide a home to return to. But abusive fathers rarely keep the home fires burning, and women can lose their children, their home, their job and their friends, all through one short prison sentence. 17,000 children a year are separated from their mothers by custody.

Jane told PRT that she was imprisoned by a Magistrates' Court, when she had not expected it. Her little boy was taken into care. When she was discharged from her sentence, all she was given to set up a home was a prison-issue thermos and a tent. Three years later, she has still not seen her son.

Not surprisingly, 55% of women given short prison sentences reoffend. But, if a sentence is suspended, so that home, job, children, family and local connections can be preserved, fewer than 30% reoffend.

Before the General Election was announced, the government was legislating for a presumption that all sentences shorter than 12 months would be suspended. Prison capacity is a maximum of 89,000 and, without that change, it is estimated that 94,000 places will be needed before the end of the year.

Albeit as an incidental, that legislation would have taken a very welcome scythe

to the damaging short sentences currently imposed upon women.

The new government will probably have to do the same. But positive as that would be, we must also give these women help to be free from the effects of abuse that drove them to criminality

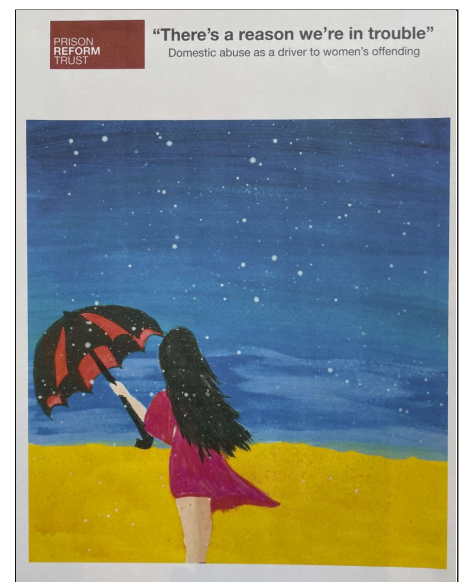
Greater Manchester and the West Midlands have established Women's Problem-Solving Courts. They rely on dedicated probation staff, harnessing local services such as mental health and housing, into a community sentence package, tailor-made for the defendant. Albeit, depleted services make this difficult to achieve, there is huge commitment in both regions and first data is beginning to look good.

An impressive innovation is that the sentencing Judge reviews the defendant's progress, at court, every few months. This acts as a discipline but with encouragement. The judges are outstanding. At the top of their profession but sensitive to the reality of these women's lives, they obviously want each defendant – and the court scheme – to succeed. In many cases, this may be the first time women have felt supported and cared about

The criminal justice system should not be leaving women in the thrall of perpetrators, and we must keep up the fight against male violence against women and girls. It is darkly ironic, that overcrowding of male prisons may bring the fresh look at reversing how such women are driven into crime through the integrated rehabilitative approach that the Corston Review recommended all those years ago.

BY DAME VERA BAIRD KC
VERA IS A VICE PRESIDENT OF THE NAW

WWW.PRISONREFORMTRUST.ORG.UK



campaigning on pensions

ALL too often we are forced to fight for what should so clearly be a right. Sometimes there is little or no justice. No more so than in the fight of WASPI (Women Against State Pension Inequality) to secure compensation. It all seemed so clear after the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman acknowledged on 23 March that failings had been made in the way the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) communicated changes to women's State Pension age. The report concluded that the government had failed women born in the 1950s by increasing, without proper notice, the age at which they could draw their State Pension and that those impacted and still living should be compensated. Sadly, for many it is already too late as they predeceased any resolution and regrettably the fight continues for compensation.

It is estimated that 3.8 million women have been affected and forced to wait up to six years longer to receive the state pension and almost 300,000 women have died waiting for an outcome. The Ombudsman recommended compensation for affected individuals by £1,000 up to £2,900, better than nothing but surely entirely insufficient. WASPI must be congratulated for their determination and my own trade union Unison and others have been at the forefront of the campaigns for justice. Unison with 80% of women in its membership was the first union to raise awareness of this deplorable issue. Even some of the normally right-wing media have been supportive. Though others have been more condemning suggesting that any payments are undeserved, are at the expense of the young, that women are being greedy and should have known about the changes from media reports at the time. Ageist attitudes, particularly where women are concerned, continue to prevail. The Conservative government, the DWP and even the Labour Party have made no commitment to pay compensation. Indeed, successive governments have done little or nothing to address women's economic inequality or the impact it will have on their future pension provision. Those affected must be compensated.

WASPI, Unison, and other trades unions are continuing to campaign, as are the National Pensioners Convention and Scottish Pensioners Forum on behalf of those affected. Calling for faster compensation to reflect the true financial loss as well as damage to mental health and well-being, and to prevent any longer-term damage. Politicians have been warned that this could become a big issue at the next general election, and WASPI intends to put pressure on candidates to commit to an adequate scheme for compensation. It is equally important that constituents write to their MPs to gain their support. The thousands who have joined demonstrations, lobbied their



MPs and added their names to petitions must be congratulated.

As always in a culture influenced by outdated male perceptions, society is only too ready to undervalue what too many regard as 'women's work'. Hardly a surprise that women in low-paid or part-time jobs, such as those working in the care sector, hospitality, cleaning, catering staff as well as those who are disabled and the many who have taken time out of work to care for children, partners, and older relatives, have reduced pensions as a result. Women are particularly vulnerable to any unprecedented rise in the cost of living. Many have been forced to continue working beyond pensionable age simply to survive and others are faced with poverty.

The Gender Pension Gap is affecting women in their late 50s who have less than two-thirds of the pension savings of men of the same age as a result of these different working patterns. Recent research suggests that 20% of all women aged 65 and over are living in poverty compared to only 16% of men and 27% of women living alone are in poverty. One third of all women rely solely on the state pension to fund retirement.

Many unions and NPC campaigned tirelessly to ensure the retention of the Triple Lock for this year. On a slightly more positive note, both the Conservatives and the Labour Party have now made a commitment to retain the Triple Lock in their election manifestos but we must not be complacent.

Liz Kendall MP, Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary speaking at the TUC Pensions Conference in London on 12 March outlined Labour's commitment to pensioners by stating that financial security in retirement is at the heart of Labour's future plans. She concluded by stating that "for current pensioners – we are on your side. Labour is determined to once again be the Pensioners Party." Perhaps I'm being overly cynical, but we'll just have to wait and see!

The fight continues for Unite the Union's "68 is Too Late" campaign supported by the National Pensioners Convention and Scottish Pensioners Forum. They aim to put pressure on the

Labour Party to back this campaign. A recent survey of 10,000 of their members showed that health workers would no longer be physically or mentally capable of working until 67 or 68. To put it simply, we are being asked to work longer, pay more and get less.

The scandal about pensions doesn't end there. The difference between the old basic state pension and new full state pension will widen significantly as years pass. The new full state pension for those reaching pensionable age after April 2016 rose to £221.20 a week, or £11,502 a year this April. Whereas the old basic state pension rose to £169.50 a week, or £8,814 a year. A difference of £2,688. NPC is campaigning along with others for this to be equalised. It is particularly vexing for those women born in the 1950s who had no alternative but to draw their pensions just prior to the implementation of the new state pension.

Add to this the scandal of tens of thousands of women underpaid by up to 60% of their state pension. Allegedly the result of a computer glitch, combined with the complexity of the pension rules and the fact that in the past an assumption was made that women would marry and not need a pension in their own right! Seemingly the government has pledged to compensate these women but once again there may be a long wait for compensation building injustice on injustice by which time many will have died and not everyone will be automatically informed. The NPC and trade unions continue to raise awareness of this deplorable situation. Anyone who thinks they may be affected should contact the DWP.

It is sensible to encourage any woman to obtain a State Pension forecast through the DWP to gain a clear picture of what they are likely to receive on reaching retirement age.

Once retired those on a low income should check to see if they are eligible for Pension Credit which is separate from the State Pension and provides extra money for those on a low income. It can help with the cost of housing and extra help if you're a carer, severely disabled, or responsible for a child or young person. Pension Credit is separate from your State Pension. The DWP estimates £1.7bn is being left unclaimed by 800,000 pensioners across the UK.

**BY ROSIE MACGREGOR
CHAIR UNISON NATIONAL RETIRED
MEMBERS COMMITTEE AND FORMER
PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL PENSIONERS
CONVENTION**

naw annual general meeting



‘WOMEN Leading in Struggle’ was the theme for the 2024 NAW AGM held at Unite HQ Theobalds Road London on Saturday 15 June. Individual members and trade union delegates from far and wide gathered to hear from our two inspirational speakers (Fran Heathcote, general secretary of PCS and Sarah Woolley, general secretary of BFAWU and vice-president of the NAW), join in discussion and debate policy motions.

Sarah Woolley began by emphasising that we must use lessons from history to encourage more young women to engage with trade unions – she reminded us that there is a willingness to join the struggle and that this was evident in the role of women in the miners’ strike in the 1980s where we saw women developing confidence and skills and taking on leadership roles. We should remember and publicise the struggles of women who went before us. She asked why the education system doesn’t include the history of working class action such as the miners’ strike, the matchgirls – establishment fear that young people may become empowered if they knew what can be achieved?

Fran Heathcote continued the theme of learning from the history of women’s struggles. One of her first roles as the first woman general secretary of PCS was delivering the annual Mary Macarthur lecture remembering the victory of the women chainmakers in Cradley Heath which established a minimum wage. She shared harrowing tales of

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our rights under threat in italy



NAW PRESIDENT LIZ PAYNE, (ABOVE LEFT) TALKS WITH (ABOVE RIGHT) ADA DONNO, VICE-PRESIDENT FOR EUROPE OF THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION (WIDF) AND PRESIDENT OF ITS AFFILIATE, THE ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN OF THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION: ITALY (AWMR ITALY) ABOUT WOMEN AND STRUGGLE IN HER COUNTRY AT THE PRESENT TIME AND WAYS FORWARD TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF JUSTICE, EQUALITY, AND PEACE



LP Thank you for joining us, Ada. Firstly, can you tell us in what ways the life experience of working-class women in Italy has changed in the past five years and what you see as the key causes of these changes?

AD I must start by saying that the condition of women in Italy is amongst the most backward in Europe: the indices of employment, poverty, presence of women in political institutions and in decision-making roles in public administration are among the lowest in Europe for historical, structural, and cultural reasons. To this we must add that the period of progressive and democratic reforms began to be eroded from the 1980s in every area under the banner of neoliberalism, coinciding with the process of capitalist restructuring on a global scale. But in recent years the processes of deterioration have undergone a dramatic and worrying acceleration. The pandemic has made more evident the immense cost imposed on women by the capitalist crisis. The economic crisis which, in Italy as throughout Europe, affects women disproportionately, is accompanied by worsening attacks on their rights, making the overall subjugation of women's bodies and health to capitalist profit more evident. And the intertwining of the mechanisms of gender, race, class, and species domination has become more evident.

The decreased funding for welfare and universal public assistance systems has meant that the overload for women with care work has increased, the time and resources that women can allocate to

their training have decreased and therefore women's capacity to compete in the job market has decreased; women are reserved for poor work, low wages, and exhausting working hours and pace. The problem of safety in the workplace for women and men has become dramatic (three people die working every day in Italy). In general, access to universal public health and education services has decreased, but this phenomenon especially affects single elderly women or those who have young children in their care.

LP What has been and will be the impact on women of the most recent national elections in your country?

AD With the latest elections there has been a clear shift to the right in the political-institutional axis in Italy (as in other European countries). The neo-fascists have entered the government, the head of government is, for the first time since the post-war period, a woman belonging to the far-right party. The consequences of the rise of the right in Italy were seen immediately: the familial, racist, and nationalist policies that fuel exploitation, violence, and gender, racial and class discrimination were exacerbated. Repression and marginalisation for those who strike or protest has increased. In the space of a year and a half, fundamental rights have diminished, starting from the right to decide about our own body, our motherhood, our sexuality or our sexual orientation and gender identity. The processes of extension of precarious contracts, erosion of welfare and dismantling and privatisation of the National Health Service have been accelerated. The citizen's income which the majority of women benefited from has been cancelled. Housing insecurity, difficulty in accessing services, and the overload of free and poorly paid care work, which falls especially on women, have increased.

The government is undermining women's right to decide if and when to be

mothers, which right Italian women had won after very hard struggles and a popular referendum in 1981, with a law that assured us of the possibility of terminating an unwanted or risky pregnancy, in public and medically assisted facilities. It was a historic victory against a patriarchy that was particularly fierce in Italy, the central seat of Catholic temporal power. But the right-wing government is making changes to the law to make it ineffective and is taking away funding from health and social services that should assist both Italian and migrant women.

LP Turning to questions of peace and war, can you say something about how the wars in Ukraine, Gaza and Sudan, the belligerence and expansionism of NATO, and the drive towards militarisation and a more general war have affected women in Italy?

AD I would like to begin by reminding us that at the NATO summit in Vilnius in July 2023 further steps were decided to expand NATO as an offensive military force ready to play the role of the global gendarme of imperialism, in accordance with the 'new strategic concept' established at the previous Madrid summit in 2022. NATO is preparing for global war, according to a fallacious vision of the world polarised between the 'good' West and anyone in the world who dares to "challenge the values and interests of the West". This reconfigured NATO is carrying out its aggressive plan through frenetic rearmament, from the Euro-Atlantic to the Indo-Pacific, supported by colossal investments that force member states to increase military spending even above 2% of GDP.

Women from the working classes are especially affected by this disproportionate increase in military spending within member countries. The shift in investment towards weapons takes resources away from the social services that women need.

We are moving towards a war economy, which drains the care economy. The phenomenon of feminisation of poverty has grown. Sexist violence, domestic violence, sexual violence and even femicide have increased.

The migration of women who flee from conflicts and end up being exploited at work or as victims of trafficking networks has been encouraged.

War is the maximum expression of patriarchal violence: we reject war policies, nationalist and militaristic, racist, Islamophobic and patriarchal ideologies that are becoming increasingly pervasive in our societies. We have witnessed this since the war in Ukraine and the Israeli war of extermination in Gaza began.

It should also be underlined that the large-scale militarisation of Europe is accompanied by dramatic authoritarian political processes within European countries, the re-emergence of neo-fascist ideologies and old nationalisms, as well

as processes of militarisation of education and scientific research (in Italy these processes have been visibly accelerated by the right-wing government).

We cannot talk about progress if there is no peace. In every war, women's rights become invisible. Peace is necessary to guarantee fundamental human rights and reaffirm the human rights of women.

For all these reasons we are against the involvement of our country in US-NATO war-plans, and we denounce the Italian governments who have transformed our entire country into a NATO base and at the same time make our people a target of possible retaliation.

LP What are the current priorities and longer-term goals of the AWMR Italy and the wider women's movement in your country going forward?

AD It is urgent to stop the advance of fascist forces in Italy and we must prevent the advance of the far right in the European Parliament. Because we want a world at Peace. Because we want a Europe that is peaceful and respectful of the sovereignty of peoples. We are against war policies that support the genocide of the people of Gaza.

We are against the increasingly close relationships between the war industry and educational institutions, schools and universities. We ask for Italy's disengagement from the imperialist war in Ukraine; we demand that we stop sending Italian military forces and equipment to theatres of war outside our borders. No soldiers or war materials or war missions outside our borders! We demand the closure of US/NATO bases in our country and say No to increased military spending, No to the unlimited expansion of NATO!

We want to put labour and care issues at the top of our country's political agenda, we want to subvert the economic, social, political and value hierarchy of the capitalist-patriarchal system which places work for the market above everything else and relegates care work to the margins, in which women especially are segregated.

LP Finally, are there ways in which international solidarity and cooperation could more effectively support the struggle of women for peace and equality in Italy at this most dangerous time?

AD To overcome the current particularly difficult situation, we need to strengthen the international alliance that unifies women's struggles towards joint objectives. It is a gigantic challenge that cannot be faced only by Italian or European women, since the interconnections with the complex events of the global class and anti-patriarchal struggle in our country and in the world are vast and unavoidable.

We are aware that it will be a long journey and we plan to move step by step, starting by identifying some issues, among the many that women face today, on which to ally ourselves and act together, creating a front that transcends borders.

It is a priority that we side with the Palestinians who resist and fight for their existence and self-determination. We should make the liberation of Palestine our struggle, just as we should make the struggles of women all over the world, in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America, our own. United we are stronger. It's not just a slogan.

We must fight together against militaristic logic and against the multiplication of military bases, against the sending of weapons to territories at war, against the supply of war technology to Israel and Ukraine.

Over the decades since the Second World War, the WIDF has played an important role in uniting forces and promoting joint action by women against war and in defence of their rights. I believe it is important to revitalise the united action of the WIDF. In doing so, it is going to be very important to relaunch the European coordination of the WIDF, promote joint actions involving affiliated organisations from Western Europe to Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean. Then we can launch effective global campaigns for peace and the rights of working women, together with WIDF affiliated organisations in the Arab region, Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

For Palestine! Against neocolonialism and imperialism! For international solidarity! For transition towards coexistence in a multicentric world, based on the concept of demilitarised and universally shared security!

PramDepot continued from page 2



exist side-by-side. The beautifully arranged shelves of colourful clothes and toys also communicated the joy of early parenthood, something that all parents should have access to regardless of their circumstances.

Karen worked closely with organisations supporting vulnerable women, involving the women these organisations supported, to develop this exhibition into an ongoing project, focusing on distributing good quality second-hand items to vulnerable mums who needed them. With a lot of support from volunteers and our local community, PramDepot grew into a sustainable organisation!

Today, the organisation remains small, although we deliver items across London. We have moved from ad hoc provision of items, to providing all the items a new mother will need via a Baby Box. Based on the Finnish baby box scheme, this box contains all the essentials, such as a steriliser, breast pump, sling, clothes, nappies, wet wipes, toiletries and more. Once it is unpacked, the specially-designed box can be used along with the mattress and sheets provided as a safe place for the baby to sleep. In addition to this core work, we also provide prams to pregnant women or new mums living in Haringey and collect thousands of donations of other items such as high chairs, cots and clothes for older babies and children each year, which we pass on to a larger baby bank for distribution to struggling families.

PramDepot focuses on those with the least access to support elsewhere. Over 80% of the women we support are asylum seekers or have irregular migration status, meaning they are barred from accessing government support such as the maternity grant or housing benefit. We also support women who are fleeing domestic violence or who have recently left prison. We hope that one day all mums will be provided with everything they need through a government-funded baby box programme. But until that day, PramDepot will be here!

Over the years, Unite has been a big supporter of PramDepot, with local branches donating thousands of pounds to make our work possible. Thank you Unite!



SYLVIA PANKHURST MEMORIAL LECTURE 2024

Sylvia never failed to challenge injustice, inequality and prejudice. Central to campaigning for A Statue for Sylvia has been Sylvia's anti-racism. It will be there to remind present and future generations to always speak out, always challenge oppression and bigotry.

Sylvia speaking out on race

"WE ARE ALL COMRADES IN THE STRUGGLE FOR
FREEDOM, AND WE MUST CAST ASIDE
ALL DIFFERENCES OF RACE, NATIONALITY, AND
GENDER TO FIGHT FOR A BETTER WORLD."
SYLVIA PANKHURST



Wortley Hall
(the Workers Statelyst Home)
Wortley, Sheffield S35 7DB



17

AUGUST 2024
SATURDAY @ 7PM

Lecture queries: ☎ 07932 87 38 38 ✉ megan@gn.apc.org

Panel Guest Speakers:

Philippa Clark

Trade union and feminist activist

Professor Mary Davis (Author)

Comrade or Brother? A History of the British Labour Movement
Sylvia Pankhurst: A Life in Radical Politics

Suki Sangha

Chair of Glasgow Trades Union Council and a trade union activist and campaigner



Study Sylvia Pankhurst

Comrade or Brother?
A History of the British Labour
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Sylvia Pankhurst: A Life in
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women chainmakers working a full shift then returning to work within hours of giving birth. Fran also reminded us of the roles women had played at Grunwick and Fords in Dagenham. She noted that the polls are predicting a Labour victory at the general election on 4 July and believed that some trade union leaders appear to be reticent in terms of holding the Labour Party to account but felt that we should be prepared to challenge and demand that we are not seeing a continuation of Tory policies.

Presentations were followed by questions/discussion touching on issues such as occupational segregation and how we engage with young women by focussing on issues such as 'safe journey home', 'stalkers'. Emphasised that trade unions need to ensure that women are part of negotiating teams. How we can build women's network in the TU movement and be receptive to suggestions from young women members that we should try innovative approaches.

The AGM moved on to debate motions supporting continuing engagement with the development of a Women's Liberation Alliance, Child Poverty and the two child benefit cap, supporting diversification of arms manufacture to socially useful products and aligning the role of Health and Safety officers with Green reps in the workplace. All motions were carried after positive debate.

The meeting paid tribute to the contribution of former Treasurer Eleanor Lewington who is unwell and thanked her for her generous donation to the NAW.

No elections were required as there were no contested posts and the following were declared elected:

- President – Liz Payne
- Secretary – Sandra Durkin
- Treasurer – Carolyn Simpson
- EC members:
- Mary Davis
- Megan Dobney
- Siobhan Endean
- Bernadette Keaveney
- Vicky Knight
- Alison Spencer-Scragg
- Anita Wright

what's on...

NAW Executive Committee
meetings are open to *all*
members.

For more information about
meetings please contact the
Secretary, Sandra Durkin,
on naw@sisters.org.uk or at
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*I would like to join the NAW. Here is £20 for the annual subscription (£10 unwaged) which includes my subscription to **sisters**, the journal of the NAW.*

Our organisation would like to affiliate to the NAW. Enclosed is:
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