

News from the Bath & West Co-operative Party

Although we don't have local council elections in our area, there are plenty of activities in the coming weeks you could participate in.

On **Saturday 5 May** we're supporting our comrades in Wells Labour Party marking international workers' day with a march, rally and fun family activities.

The flags and banners parade opens the event at noon, if you want to join the march assemble from 11.30am at the North End of Sadler Street before setting off for the Bishop's Barn on Silver Street where all activities are based.

This is the first of what Wells Labour hopes will be an annual event on May Day bank holiday weekend.

We are aiming to produce a new Bath & West Co-op Party banner so please come along and support us.

[More details of this free event online via the Eventbrite website](#)

Meanwhile, in Bath...

The **10th Larkhall Festival** is also planned for all **four days of the weekend**. The [full programme is available online](#). We're planning to join our colleagues from the **Bath Co-operative Alliance** on **Sunday 6 May** who will be marching as suffragettes in the Fancy Dress Procession – meet at [The Bladuds Head pub](#) (Catsley Place, St Saviour's Road, BA1 6TA) at 12.45 to set off at 1pm.

Windrush scandal – something urgent we can all do



At April's meeting we had a passionate discussion about the unfolding Windrush scandal. As you might expect from dedicated co-operators, we were appalled at the **shocking treatment of *bona fide* British citizens.**

We wanted to take some action so Peter, our Party chair, was asked to

write a strong letter and/or a news story for the local press that expressed our **deep concerns about the 'hostile environment' government policy** and how it has been used on lawful migrants to the UK.

As the story developed it proved difficult to keep up with the latest twists and turns while thinking of something that could prove newsworthy for the general public in our area.

The solution was to write individual letters to the nine MPs who have constituencies in the region we cover, on behalf of the Bath & West Co-operative Party.

They are:

- Michelle Donelan (Chippenham)
- John Glen (Salisbury)
- James Gray (North Wiltshire)
- Andrew Murrison (South West Wiltshire)
- Claire Perry (Devizes)
- Wera Hobhouse (Bath)
- Jacob Rees-Mogg (North East Somerset)
- James Heapey (Somerton & Frome)
- David Warburton (Wells)

The gist of the letter is reproduced below.

We are asking you to:

- use the text below to **draft your own letter** to your particular MP from the list above
- then **email your MP** via their [contact details on Parliament's website](#)
- **let us know** how they respond

Suggested draft email/letter to your MP (feel free to amend to better reflect your views)

"I am writing to express my heartfelt concerns about how the so-called 'hostile environment' has been applied in practice; something which has been compounded by crude target setting and political point scoring as some ministers and officials manoeuvre to avoid responsibility.

What has happened to the Windrush generations – and is still happening to others – shows a worrying trend of dehumanising our society, where policy decisions are made with little regard for the impact on human beings. There are

echoes of Grenfell; administrative systems that should protect individual well-being are under-resourced and cease to be effective. And too often the people suffering because of such policies are those who are more vulnerable or marginalised.

It's wrong to expect landlords, healthcare workers and employers to 'police' immigration policy when the whole system is set up to brand all immigrants as unwanted and unwelcome, regardless of whether they are entitled to live or work in the UK.

We support the call for:

- *an urgent freeze on forced repatriation flights to the Caribbean while all individual cases are reviewed in light of the government's change of heart*
- *an independent inquiry into the impact of the government's immigration policy on the Windrush generation*
- *the impact on other immigrant groups*
- *an assessment whether there are enough trained public officials to ensure people do not suffer unfair discrimination because of ill-considered decision making.*

Please can you add your name to the growing list of MPs asking for an enquiry in Parliament."

Make a change for the better in your community – stand as a Labour & Co-operative candidate in your local council elections

We don't have council elections in the area we cover this year but we do next year and in 2021. It's possible to stand as joint Labour and Co-operative candidate and we would welcome more people willing to put their names forward for selection in their area.

You'll need to be a member of both political parties in order to qualify as one of our official candidates - more information on the [Co-operative Party website](#).

B&NES council and Mendip district council both have elections in May 2019. Somerset county council and Wiltshire county council both have elections in May 2021.

[Contact Jack Whitehead](#) if you have any queries.

Ideas wanted: what should we be doing with our money?

We have a budget to spend on our activities in the coming year and would like to hear from you about any ideas you may have about what we could do to promote the Co-operative Party.

[Email Jack Whitehead](mailto:jack@actionresearch.net) with your thoughts.



Do it ourselves – free event Saturday 2 June (10.30am to 4pm), Friends Meeting House, Bath

Join us at our second 'mini conference' with the support of the Bath Co-operative Alliance as we explore

- how co-operative values influence our everyday lives
- developing a future powered by co-operation, including the six steps to build community wealth
- what we are doing to build our co-operative cities

Free lunch provided – please let us know if you want to attend so we can plan the catering.

RSVP Jack Whitehead: jack@actionresearch.net

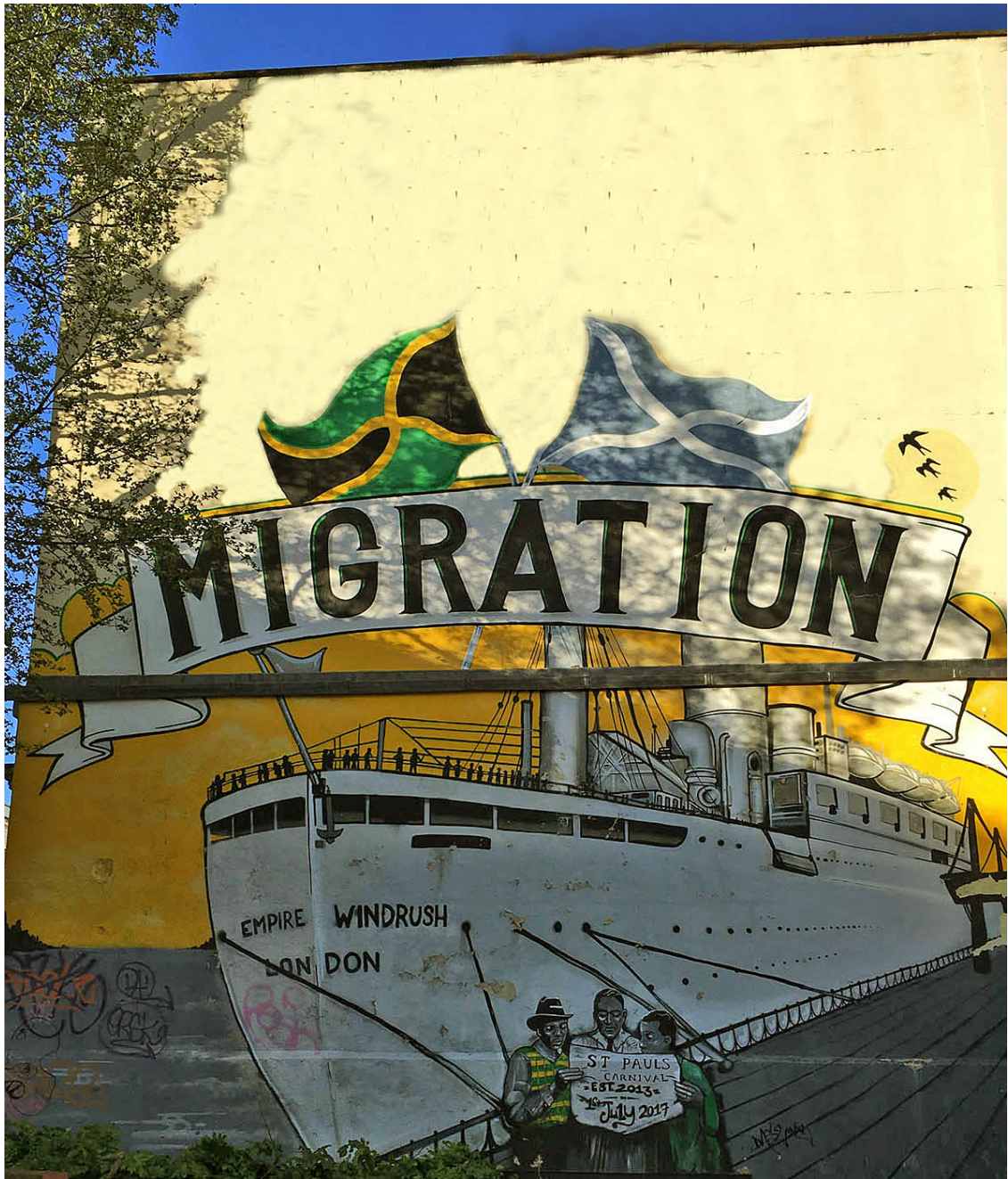
More information

Co-operative values: <https://ica.coop/en/whats-co-op/co-operative-identity-values-principles>

Six steps to build community wealth: [6 Steps to Build Community Wealth](#)

6 Steps to Build Community Wealth

Using what we already have to generate local economic growth
co-operatively



MIGRATION

EMPIRE WINDRUSH
LONDON

ST PAULS
CARNIVAL
- EST. 2013 -
July 2017

M.S. 2017

