



Ealing Reclaim Social Care Action Group Newsletter
April 2025

Update on our latest activities

Ealing Reclaim Social Care Action Group (ERSCAG) regularly attends official meetings such as the Health and Wellbeing Board (held on 10 April) and the next Health and Adult Social Services Scrutiny Panel (1 May). Questions were submitted to both – covering changes to the Borough’s daycare provision; the impact of CPZs/School Exclusion Zones on disabled people, carers and care-workers; the operation of Careline; user involvement in service provision etc. The coming month is likely to be very busy too, since we hope to have a series of separate meetings with senior staff member Kerry Stevens, and two of our local MPs – Deirdre Costigan (Ealing Southall) and James Murray (Ealing North).

Regarding daycare facilities, Ealing Council reported (17 April) “Big Improvements in Adult Day Centre Services” with services at the Michael Flanders Centre and the Cowgate Day Centre being moved “*to an improved four site model*”. Obviously, if this leads to more daycare locally in the Borough (with reduced travel times etc), it is to be welcomed, but funding will be key, and it is vital to monitor if mixing groups of older people with dementia and younger people with learning disabilities in the same centres works. It will be important to monitor if family carers are involved and are offered choices about what day care options are on offer.

At the same time, we have been invited to speak to other local groups – and ERSCAG attended the recent meeting of CASH (Campaign for Action in Sheltered Housing) with which we had campaigned around the closure of Ealing Careline. Ealing Healthwatch has indicated that it will be looking at the transition from Ealing to Harrow Careline in its programme of work for 2025/6 and ERSCAG has provided a brief on its concerns.

Ealing Reclaim Social Care Action Group (ERSCAG) is holding its Annual General Meeting virtually on 2nd June. If you are a regular supporter and would like to attend, and receive our annual report etc., please contact the Secretary (details on page 4)

Campaigns – current or upcoming national campaigns and events

End Social Care Disgrace continues to hold regular meetings bringing together activists from different parts of England. Their last public meeting can be seen on <https://youtu.be/YSNAhTD89sQ> and check out their website for their newsletters (www.endsocialcaredisgrace.org). The April edition had articles about benefit cuts and the impact of benefit changes on carers, as well as some practical ideas for action.

Change.org has a petition calling for a dedicated minister for disabled people [Sign now with a click](#)

The National Pensioners Convention (17 April) marked the two year anniversary of the launch of the campaign by many groups to have a Commissioner for Older People

[Click here to read the article](#)

Deaf Awareness Week – this year runs from 5-11 May 2025. For more information see: <https://deafnessresourcecentre.org/deaf-awareness-week-2025/>

Keep Our NHS Public (KONP) noted that the People's Assembly is organising a national demonstration against austerity on 7 June in London. *“We are calling on as many people as possible to join [the NHS Bloc](#) on the day. Let's show the government just how serious we are about fighting for the NHS”*. For more info - [go to the events page on our website](#).

Ealing MENCAP is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year; see their website for various local Ealing events <https://www.ealingmencap.org.uk/who-we-are/contact-locations/>

Latest developments – locally and nationally

Benefit system & cost of living:

- <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/mar/30/labour-attack-disabled-people-benefits-cuts>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/apr/14/electoral-wake-up-call-dozens-of-labour-mps-risk-losing-majorities-over-welfare-cuts>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/apr/17/ministers-avoid-labour-rebellion-disability-cuts>

Carers:

- And some better news: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2025/apr/15/dwp-overhaul-carers-allowance-checks-overpayment-scandal>

Care workers:

A range of recent events and articles have focused on concerns about the exploitation of care-workers:

- Resolution Foundation held a virtual meeting on 14 April on the topic of foreign-born workers *“who bring vital skills to the UK labour market, boosting growth and supporting critical public services like health and social care. But a substantial minority face barriers to stable employment. Foreign-born workers are more likely to be on flexible contracts that can bring financial insecurity..... and are more likely to experience some forms of unlawful treatment at work. These vulnerabilities reflect broader inequalities in the UK labour market, and a failure to protect foreign-born workers risks driving down standards across the labour market as a whole”*.
- To support foreign born workers see: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/707698>
- UNISON is also active in such work <https://www.unison.org.uk/news/press-release/2025/02/migrant-care-staff-having-to-share-beds-sleep-rough-and-charged-thousands-in-illegal-fees/#>
- 38 Degrees the online campaigning group is also promoting a petition about the abuse of all workers (and the mis-use of Non-Disclosure Agreements) https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/stop-employers-covering-up-abuse-1?share=76878f15-0352-4f14-9887-32c7a226fd30&source=email-share-button&utm_campaign=blast105519&utm_medium=socialshare&utm_source=email

Disability

- For arguments in response to myths about disability benefits, see the Disability Cuts Mythbuster Information Pack which challenges persistent myths by providing statistics showing that (https://www.linkedin.com/search/results/all/?keywords=%23disabilitycutsmythbusters&origin=HASH_TAG_FROM_FEED&lipi=urn%3Ali%3Apage%3Ad_UNKNOWN_ROUTE_search.results.generic.index%3B1gsKs6%2FIS7yClC8MZRXHig%3D%3D): more disabled people work than don't; disabled people contribute seven times more to the economy than disability benefits cost;

disabled people on benefits are much poorer on average than people who do not need benefits; PIP (Personal Independence Payment) is not an out-of-work benefit and cutting PIP will make it harder for more disabled people to work; PIP is hard for disabled people to get, not easy; people only get PIP if they are disabled and struggle to function in daily life

- Local Democracy Reporter (Philip James Lynch) reports from neighbouring Hounslow Council “*Words can’t describe my happiness’: West London residents move into new accessible homes*” The development will now home up to 28 people.

Funding

- The Independent reported in January 2025 that “*families are facing £1160 a week care home bills*” and reported that older people are nearly a third more likely to go into residential care after spending Christmas with their families. This data was released by www.carehome.co.uk – which provides a comparison site helping people look for appropriate residential care.
- For the Womens Budget Group (2 April) response to the government’s Spring Statement [Read the full response](#)
- Prem Sikka (Labour member of the House of Lords) writes “Why austerity is a political choice, not an economic necessity” <https://leftfootforward.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=65b47e7ed535f89a2113322cd&id=82bb91fd13&e=367ea0174a>
- And more locally, Ealing Today (10 April) asks [Is There a Stealth Plan to Shut Ealing Community Transport?](#)

Health

- <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/apr/08/warnings-dementia-tsunami-research-hope>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/apr/14/exercise-risk-dementia-study-middle-age>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/apr/16/my-sister-died-10-years-ago-heres-what-i-wish-i-had-known-about-dementia-when-she-was-alive>

Legislation

- <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/apr/08/assisted-dying-vote-delayed-leadbeater-commons>

Reports/Events:

- Michael Rosen, in ‘Word of Mouth’ talks of the words used about getting older and why they matter: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m0022cm5?partner=uk.co.bbc&origin=share-mobile>
- Kings Fund: In March 2025, this think tank issued a report entitled: What should national policy-makers do to make care closer to home a reality?

[Explore our findings](#)

Your Help Needed:

- Ealing Today reports that [Ealing Hospital Appeals for Return of Walking Aids](#), given that the Trust spends £40,000 a year on replacements

Sources of advice and help

Ealing Council’s Adult Services produces a regular newsletter, and its Spring 2025 edition carries information on workshops for carers; returning loaned equipment; applying for Attendance Allowances; HIV testing and early diagnosis; and information about parking and disabled bay permits. In particular, it notes that there has been a 30% reduction in the maximum waiting time for assessments (and encouraging those waiting to hear from social care services to contact 020 8825 8000 or sscallcentre@ealing.gov.uk). Another item of interest to those who have followed the rash of Blue Badge thefts in Ealing and wider afield: “*if you are a blue badge holder and live in a controlled parking zone, you are entitled to a free parking permit – write to Ealing Council Parking Services, PO Box 46264, W5 2UN or parkingservices@ealing.gov.uk.*”

In its weekly online update (3 April), Ealing Council includes a report entitled “A Year of Progress” which notes in relation to social care that “Across the borough community workers are benefiting from the Real Living Wage, ensuring fair pay for those working to support others. Plans are in place to extend this to care home workers by 2026, strengthening the borough’s care sector. Ealing Council’s approach is to empower residents to lead independent lives. It has done this by supporting 3,282 vulnerable people to live independently, surpassing the target of 3,000. It has also given 11% of adult social care users direct payments, allowing them greater choice and control over their lives. This person-centred approach is being enhanced through increased training, awareness and engagement, ensuring even more residents benefit from this transformative service.”

Which magazine (13 April) carries advice on [Accessing support when banking with dementia](#)

Bringing Us Together organises regular online sessions helping lone parent carers of disabled children, young people and adults – email tony@bringingustogether.org.uk. ‘Being the Boss’ has organised a number of workshops for individual employers and those receiving Direct Payments facilitated by Inclusion London (for more info email karen@bringingustogether.org.uk). Inclusion London is also developing a network of support for CEOs of Deaf or Disabled Persons Organisations - for more info and/or registering for 1 May online session - [Find out more and register](#)

Social care over the longer term

A Guardian editorial dated 22 April was entitled “Social care: while politicians dither, this underfunded sector is in danger of falling apart” reports: “Louise Casey, the person chosen by Sir Keir Starmer’s government to find a solution and build a cross-party consensus around funding, is widely respected for her bold interventions in highly contested areas. But diverting her from social care to produce a short report on grooming, as ministers did in January, sent a terrible message about the lack of urgency that bedevils this issue. It should have been possible to find someone else in order that the social care work could begin straight away”. ERSCAG could not agree more. We are in touch with all three local Ealing MPs seeking an explanation of the Labour government’s ‘dithering’ in relation to the Casey Review – watch this space!

Social Care Future – writes in their Spring newsletter that it has shared [these ideas](#) with the independent Casey Review of the future of adult social care.

The Health Service journal reported on Wes Streeting’s testimony to the parliamentary select committee on health and care “Wes Streeting has rejected the notion of merging the delivery or funding of social care with the NHS, arguing it is better “delivered and commissioned through local government”.

[Check out our website - www.erscag.org.uk](http://www.erscag.org.uk)
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Please get in touch if you need material in other formats