

## Citizens prepare to impact Local Elections

Members in Ealing (below), Hammersmith and Fulham, and in Kensington and Chelsea met to agree the proposals we will put to the party leaders in each borough later in April. These are essentially based on the CITIZENS Agenda which we voted on back in January but with a greater emphasis on local borough issues.

We have been surprised and pleased by the positive response all round from council leaders, and their opponents in the minority parties, to our

invitation to attend West London Citizens Accountability Assemblies (dates and venues below).

We hope they will be equally surprised and intrigued to discover the growing power and diversity of West London Citizens' membership, the strong research behind our proposals, and our determination to work constructively for the change we want in West London.

Our proposals will be sent in (continued on page 2)



## Bin the Rats Action Team Members Hit Streets of Southall

*Joyce interviews a resident who sees the funny side of*

On a blustery Saturday in late March, West London Citizens took to the streets of Southall with clip boards, questionnaires and smiling faces to quiz shoppers, residents and business owners. The questionnaire elicited a strong and consistent response, confirming our own members' view that the town is overrun with rats and rubbish, affecting the quality of life of all.

Ramgarhia Sabha offered team members lunch at the temple. For some it was a first visit to a Sikh institution. The food and hospitality was more than welcome after a couple of hours pounding streets.

Since that day our action team has met to figure out next steps. A powerful proposal for environmental improvements is being developed, based on responses to our questionnaire, and the research we have carried out in what happens in other boroughs.

Party leaders in Ealing will be presented with this proposal when they meet us on 27<sup>th</sup> April at Cardinal Wiseman school. We are also inviting an array of influential locals (e.g. head teachers, doctors, local business and faith leaders) to attend our assembly on 27<sup>th</sup> and demonstrate support for our 'Bin the Rats' Action Plan.

### NEW DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Time and Date:	Event:	Venues:
Wed 12/04/2006 18.30-20.30	<b>West London CITIZENS</b> members meet Tom Peryer, director of Ed at London Diocese School board about the Chelsea Academy	<b>Servite Parish Hall, 262a Fulham Road, SW10</b>
Tue 25/04/2006 19:30-21.15	<b>Kensington &amp; Chelsea Accountability Assembly.</b> Members to meet Cllr Merrick Cockell (Cons) and Cllr Keith Cunningham (Lab) to discuss our campaigns and get their support in public for them.	<b>St Charles Sixth Form College St Charles Sq, London W10</b>
Thu 27/04/2006 19:30-21.15	<b>Ealing Accountability Assembly.</b> Members meet Cllr Leo Thomson (Lab), Cllr Jason Stacey (Cons)& Cllr Harvey Rose (LibDem) to discuss our campaigns and win their support for them in public	<b>Cardinal Wiseman School, Greenford Road, UB6</b>
Sun 30/04/2006 15:00-16.45	<b>Hammersmith and Fulham Accountability Assembly.</b> Cllr Stephen Burke (Lab) and Cllr Stephen Greenhalgh (Cons) to meet our members, hear about our campaigns and sign up to support	<b>Sacred Heart School Reception Room, Bute Gardens, W6</b>
Mon 01/05/2006 9.45-11.30	<b>St Joseph the Workers' Day Mass</b> celebrated by the Cardinal and the RC ethnic chaplains	<b>Westminster Cathedral Victoria Street, London SW1</b>
Monday, 01/05/2006 11.30-12.30	<b>Living Wage Rally</b> in Cathedral Square, with London's first Living Wage employer awards	<b>Westminster Cathedral Victoria Street, London SW1</b>
Thu 18/05/2006 19:00-21:30	<b>West London Citizens GO PUBLIC</b> assembly – to agree first public deals on our campaigns and welcome new members	<b>Hammersmith Assembly Hall, Kings Street, London W6</b>

(cont. from page 1) advance to the party leaders so that they have at least a week to prepare their responses. We hope to have a short pre-meeting with each of the candidates who will appear on the platform of our assemblies so that we can brief them, introduce them to our organisation and also get a sense of their priorities and ideas.

What we are looking for ideally are clear 'YES' answers to all the policy ideas we are suggesting. All our proposals are based on the campaign priorities of our membership and reflect widely felt local concerns.

We will be asking each candidate to agree to attend our GO PUBLIC assembly on 18th May, by which time the elections will be

over, and the leaders of each borough will be back in power for another four years. Getting the politicians to meet us **after** the elections is often harder, but what we're seeking is a working relationship with a regular meeting built into their diaries for West London Citizens members.

It is essential that we have a packed hall at each of our forthcoming Election assemblies. That's what will convince the candidates to say 'Yes' to working with us on our chosen priority areas. 'People is power' - we say it and believe it but we've also got to show it!

For details of the WLC proposals being sent to candidates, go to: [www.westlondoncitizens.org.uk](http://www.westlondoncitizens.org.uk)

## White City Development



*Architect's illustration of what's coming our way at White City*

**Our White City Action Team** had its first formal meeting on the 3rd of April at the Maria Assumpta Centre. The development, situated in between Shepherds Bush and White City Station is going to be the largest shopping centre in London and is scheduled to be completed mid 2008. Boasting over 270 retail outlets and 4 major flagship stores the potential benefit for the local residents is immense. But our team has been asking hard questions about how to guarantee that local communities really do get the best possible deal.

The action team identified four key areas which we intend to take up with the developer, Westfield, and with civic leaders: child care, living wage employment, jobs for local people, and facilities for the community within the vast space being developed. The action team decided to invite a senior representative of Westfield to our assembly on 18th May in Hammersmith Assembly hall, and Dame Sally Powell, 'queen of regeneration' in LBHF.

## Supplementary Schools in Hammersmith and Fulham

A lively meeting of members in Hammersmith and Fulham on 23<sup>rd</sup> March worked on the proposals we will be taking to the borough's party leaders in the run up to 4<sup>th</sup> May elections. One new issue arose, namely the problems faced by supplementary schools in the borough which are run overwhelmingly by community volunteers after school and on weekends. The need for additional educational support for children in the borough is overwhelming with results at many secondary schools well below na-

tional average and, more importantly, beneath parents' expectations. Children from some ethnic minority backgrounds do particularly poorly.

In some London boroughs, supplementary schools receive considerable support and have good relationships with mainstream schools; in Hammersmith and Fulham this is not the case. Indeed some mainstream schools are actually profiteering by charging supplementary schools to use their premises on the weekend. It is perfectly true that the quality of

tutoring offered by supplementary schools varies considerably. Some are able to bring out the very best in children who are persistently poorly behaved and underperforming in the mainstream sector; others lack the skills and know-how to make a real difference to children's performance in national tests.

A West London Citizens team has been formed to develop a vision document for supplementary education in the borough. If you have an interest in this issue, please contact

Catherine Howarth to find out more. We have already been finding out about the best provision offered in other London boroughs. We are well on our way to figuring out what it's going to take to get to that standard and beyond in Hammersmith and Fulham.



*Girls from Al Muntada, where Supplementary Schools are well supported*

### HOTEL WORKERS **RISING!**



*lifting one another above the poverty line*

Members of West London Citizens have been moved by the powerful testimonies of hotel workers at our meetings over the last year. Hotel branches joined as founding members of West London Citizens in September 2005. However, the scale of exploitation in the industry, particularly amongst recent Polish migrants who work as chambermaids cleaning rooms, had seemed almost over-

whelming.

Recent developments give us courage to start actively pursuing change. A dynamic American union, UNITE-HERE, which is running the 'Hotel Workers Rising' campaign across the USA has offered to help London Citizens to begin exposing the dire employment conditions in London's luxury hotels, and the startling injury rates of women who do heavy lifting daily under pres-

sure to get more rooms completed for a few additional pounds. The Hilton chain, which operates prestigious and very profitable hotels on both sides of the Atlantic, is going to come under sustained pressure to conform to Living Wage standards and take greater care of vulnerable employees.

Calibre, an employment agency who provides maids for Hilton hotels in London but also for the

Kensington Close hotel, will receive particularly close scrutiny from WLC.

We were delighted that Gordon Perry, chief exec of Kensington and Chelsea Housing body (TMO) took up the cause of housekeepers at the Kensington Close. Workers who met him and told him their story were delighted that he committed to withdraw TMO business from the hotel until the employment problems are cleared up.



### LUNAR HOUSE CAMPAIGN

Members of South London Citizens are continuing to press for change at Lunar House, the notorious immigration processing centre in Croydon. SLC has very recently re-

ceived a formal response from Lyn Homer, Director General of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate to the 28 recommendations for change which emerged from our 'Citizens Enquiry' into Lunar House.

Our members are currently evaluating her response, and will be meeting with her on 25th April go through the action plan and to get firm deadlines on the commitments being made by the IND.

Powerful Citizen Action! Congrats SLC.

## On the Edge of Living Wage Victory at Queen Mary's

Members of London Citizens (TELCO) including the Geography Department of Queen Mary have been building a powerful Living Wage movement on campus over the last year. At issue are the hundreds of contracted cleaners at the university employed on the minimum wage with no sick pay and only 12 days paid holiday.

London Citizens first wrote to Principal Adrian Smith about this injustice in July 2005. Months later he conceded that the Living Wage was a worthy goal and recognized

London Citizens as a group he needed to work with. Since then a video letter making the case for change has been shown to Queen Mary's College Council. It features cleaners, students, academics and neighbouring community leaders. Seeing the breadth and depth of support tipped the balance our way, and we hope to get confirmation very soon that Queen Mary will be the first Living Wage Campus in the UK. If it is, we anticipate QM being on the platform to collect a Living Wage Employers Award on 1st May.



*The movement for a Living Wage at Queen Mary, University of London has spread to other campuses most notably London School of Economics. If you want to make it happen in a place you know, get in touch with matthew.bolton@londoncitizens.org.uk*

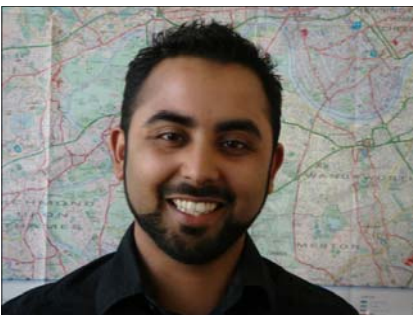
## Living Wage Employer Awards

High profile organisations and employers in London who have improved wages and working conditions of their contract cleaners will receive the first ever Living Wage Employers Awards on 1<sup>st</sup> May.



Global accountants KPMG, along with the Royal London hospital, and the Institute for Public Policy Research will be amongst the award winners. So too will members of London Citizens, such as Aston-Mansfield in East London and St Charles Sixth Form College in West London, who have renegotiated their own contracts to become Living Wage organisations.

It's important to celebrate the great progress which is being made across the capital, pioneered by London Citizens. Onwards and upwards we go!




## Jamal Mannan joins West London Citizens

New associate organiser Jamal Mannan has been working for four weeks on recruitment of members. He will be in touch so keep your diaries free for a one-to-one!

## Make Your Organisation a Beautiful Banner!


Join us for a unique 'Banner-Making' workshop on Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> April (2.30-5.30pm) as we prepare to make 1<sup>st</sup> May our most colourful day ever. London Citizens members with their banners will process into Westminster Cathedral, and then fill the square outside the Cathedral for a magnificent Living Wage rally.

Cecilia Finn, chaplain at Cardinal Wiseman school, is an experienced banner maker and designer. She will be leading the workshop, and will bring all the materials we need. If you're coming, let Catherine Howarth know so we can predict numbers.



*Feast of St Joseph the Worker*  
Mass in Support of Migrant Workers in London

Monday 1st May  
Westminster Cathedral · Victoria




**09:45 Mass**

Preceded by a spectacular procession of representatives from London's diverse communities, occupations and civic organisations.

Concelebrants: Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, Archbishop of Westminster; Kevin McDonald, Archbishop of Southwark; and Thomas McMahon, Bishop of Brentwood.

In partnership with the Ethnic Chaplains of Brentwood, Southwark, and Westminster.



**11:30 LONDON CITIZENS 'Living Wage' Rally**

Piazza outside the Cathedral.


London's faith, trade union and civic communities stand together as LONDON CITIZENS in support of a living wage and respectful conditions for all London's workers.

LONDON CITIZENS Workers Association to be launched and the first 'Living Wage Employers Awards' will be presented.


Every day thousands of immigrants living in London experience exploitation in their workplaces and neighbourhoods. Our faith, driven by Catholic Social Teaching, demands that we stand up and speak out as one for justice.

Come and join fellow workers, migrants, civic and trade union leaders with LONDON CITIZENS member communities, the Catholic Church and other faith leaders for a morning of reflection, celebration and action on 1st May.


For more information contact London CITIZENS on 020 7375 1658 or [www.londoncitizens.org.uk](http://www.londoncitizens.org.uk)



*Diocese of Westminster*



*Diocese of Brentwood*



*Diocese of Southwark*

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