

## RECLAIM ROSSLYN ROAD

### Update 3: Rosslyn Road BPAS Clinic Protest

Much has happened since our November newsletter. Here is a truncated version of events and activities but please contact us if you would like more detail on any point.

#### 1. **Our petition**

We collected 390 local resident signatures on our petition, which was presented to Richmond Council in November. At the same meeting, Cllr. Helen Hill raised it as a Ward concern. The petition was well received and the Council committed to "do whatever is lawful to stop these protesters." However, the Council does not believe it currently has the powers to create an exclusion zone around the clinic in Rosslyn Road.

#### 2. **National 'Back Off' campaign**

BPAS (who run about one third of all abortion clinics in the UK) have recently started a national campaign to get exclusion zones established around all clinics and doctors' surgeries where abortions can be carried out. The BPAS campaign entitled 'Back-Off' can be found at:

<http://back-off.org>

We have committed ourselves to help with this campaign.

#### 3. **Meeting with Vince Cable, MP**

We met Dr Cable earlier this month and gave him a copy of our petition. He was supportive but did not appreciate the insidious nature of the protests or the need for legislation. He has now, as promised at our meeting, written to the six other LibDem MPs, who have a BPAS clinic in their constituency, asking them to sign the parliamentary Early Day Motion (see below), which is promoting the need for exclusion zones around all abortion clinics. More importantly, he has also written to the Home Secretary indicating that he is persuaded of the need for exclusion zones and highlighting the Back-Off campaign, the Early Day Motion currently in parliament and an increasingly high-profile national petition on [change.org](http://change.org) petition (see below).

We have also written to Dr Tania Mathias, Conservative candidate opposing Dr Cable in the forthcoming general election and, also, to Yvette Cooper, Labour shadow home secretary. Ms Cooper has recently written sympathetically on this subject:

<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/women-attending-abortion-clinics-have-a-right-not-to-be-menaced-9913654.html>

#### 4. **Blackfriars clinic video**

An inspirational tirade by a passing woman at the vile protests outside the Blackfriars clinic went viral on the internet and has received untold 'hits'. It is well worth a look. We believe this inspired the national petition. The link is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XMy-V1TioHI>

#### 5. **National activity**

Inspired by the Blackfriars clinic video, an individual has started an online petition urging the set-up of exclusion zones. This can be found at:

<https://www.change.org/p/theresa-may-mp-please-create-a-legal-exclusionary-zone-outside-of-abortion-clinics>

Clearly, the more signatures that are collected the better. You may wish to unsubscribe from change.org once you have signed if you wish to avoid getting other material from them.

There is also an Early Day Motion in parliament, EDM 612, proposed by Caroline Lucas of the Green Party and signed by, among others, Zac Goldsmith, MP for Richmond, supporting the BPAS campaign asking for exclusion zones around the clinics. EDMs are used to raise awareness of an issue but do not lead directly to changes in legislation.

#### 6. **Rosslyn Road clinic**

Whilst the offensive 'pavement display' pictures have not been seen recently, young women continue to be stopped at the main gate of the Rosslyn Road clinic. For those of you who feel this is not right, you can interrupt any such 'conversation' and help the woman to extricate herself if she wishes to do so. We have found that to simply ask the woman: "Are you happy having this conversation?" is enough and, in its small way, very clearly helps some of the young women.

#### 7. **Our campaign – more members needed**

<http://e-voice.org.uk/reclaimrosslynroad>

Please ask any neighbours or local friends who support us but have not yet given us their email address to visit our website and use the "Contact us" tool or mail us direct at *[reclaimrosslyn@gmail.com](mailto:reclaimrosslyn@gmail.com)*

**Reclaim Rosslyn Road**

**21 January 2015**