



Abortion Rights

Registration 10am

Morning sessions 10.30-11.45am

The morning session will have three workshops running concurrently

1. Irish Activism: Activists from Ireland, north and south, share experiences and tactics.

Chair: Judith Orr, Abortion Rights Executive Committee Member

Sinéad Kennedy, Secretary of the Coalition to Repeal the 8th

Emma Campbell, Alliance for Choice Belfast.

Cara Sanquest, London Irish Abortion Rights.

It's been an extraordinary few years for abortion politics in across Ireland. It's particularly poignant that the 50th anniversary of the 1967 Abortion Act comes in the same year as the 5th anniversary of the utterly avoidable death of Savita Halappanavar. While the 1967 Abortion Act should be celebrated it's vital that we look at the ongoing struggle of women across the Irish Sea without even the access to legal abortion the 1967 Act allows.

2. Solidarity and Struggle: Why abortion is a trade union issue.

Chair: Rachel Earlington, Abortion Rights Executive Committee Member

Carolyn Simpson, Unite

Jan Nielsen, NUT

Michelle Gordon, GMB

Access to free, safe legal abortion is crucial to women's economic, educational and social advancement. Barriers to reproductive rights are barriers to full political and workplace participation. Historically the trade union movement has been instrumental in defending the right to abortion whenever it has come under attack since the 1967 Act was passed.

3. Holding the high moral ground: how to stop the anti-choice minority highjacking the conversation

Chair: Franki Appleton, Abortion Rights Executive Committee Member

Pam Lowe, Aston University Lecturer

Polly Vernon, Grazia and The Times

Cat Smith MP, Christians for Choice

Zoe Williams, The Guardian

Public opinion in Britain is overwhelmingly pro-choice, but due to the institutionalised stigma around abortion, perpetuated and exploited by a loud anti-choice minority, this is too often not reflected in social debates. Politics and the law have been infected with anti-choice rhetoric and are now firmly out of touch with public opinion. Over the last few years we have seen a notable increase in reported incidents of clinic harassment. It's time for the pro-choice movement to assert the moral validity of a pro-choice stance.



Abortion Rights

Panel in main hall 12-1.15pm

Beyond the Backstreet: Exploring the history of the struggle for a woman's right to choose

Chair: Jane Garvey, BBC Radio 4 Women's Hour

Diane Munday, Activist from Abortion Law Reform Association

Dilys Cossey, Activist from Abortion Law Reform Association

Ann Rossiter, Activist and Author

Judith Orr, Author of Abortion Wars, National Abortion Campaign

This panel is an opportunity to pay homage to the legacy of the heroic activists that were at the forefront of the movement that brought in the life-saving legislation that is the 1967 Abortion Act. It will also look at the last 50 years of abortion activism. At a time when there are so many insidious attempts to roll back women's reproductive rights it's vital that we remember the reality of life for women before the act was brought in.

Lunch 1.15 – 1.45pm

Afternoon Sessions 1.45-2.45pm

The afternoon session will have three workshops running concurrently

1. An intersectional approach to abortion campaigning

Chair: Sophie Bolt, Abortion Rights Executive Committee Member

Anne Kane, Activist

Liza Bakeyi, gal-dem

Satia Sa Dias, Melanin Millenials

Zing Tsjeng, Broadly

There is a long-standing relationship between the anti-abortion movement and a wider reactionary agenda. Historically women have been denied full reproductive rights because of the institutionalised racism in society. Women's rights are human rights and abortion is a fundamental part of women's liberation and that's why the pro-choice movement has to recognise the extra barriers to access that exist for women who experience more than one intersection of oppression. This includes ensuring campaigns are inclusive of women of diverse backgrounds.

2. Film screening with Q+A 'How the 1967 Abortion Act changed our lives'

Dr Jayne Kavanagh, Doctor, campaigner and filmmaker

This moving new film captures a moment in history, pre and post-1967, from the perspectives of the women who needed contraceptive and abortion care, the health professionals who helped them and the people who were instrumental in the passing of the 1967 Abortion Act. It gives a powerful snapshot of people's experiences in their own words.



Abortion Rights

3. What does women centred legislation and practice look like?

Chair: Jillian Merchant, Abortion Rights Executive Committee Member

Dr Sally Sheldon, Professor of Medical Law

Caoilfhionn Gallagher, QC

Professor Wendy Savage, Doctor and Activist

The 1967 Abortion Act was truly groundbreaking and continues to have a tangible impact on the mental and physical health of women across Britain. But as science and society have moved on the law is holding back the ability to fully make the most of new medical advances. This panel will look at what law and practice we should fight for that can best serve women's needs in the future.

Closing Session 3.00 – 3.45pm

Imagining better: 21st century abortion politics

Chair: Kelley Temple, Abortion Rights Executive Committee Member

Kerry Abel, Chair of Abortion Rights

Stella Creasy MP

Barbara Ntumy, Sexual Health & anti racist campaigner

As this is our final panel we want to galvanise the audience to take action, to get more involved in pro-choice campaigning and ultimately reshape abortion politics for the 21st century. We want to look at what we can change and improve within the pro-choice movement as well as lay out a road map for change.