



Your union branch newsletter - March/April 2009

As world leaders prepare to meet in London **UNISON SAYS PUT PEOPLE FIRST!**

At the beginning of April the G20 world leaders are set to meet in London to discuss the global economic downturn. Around the world there is growing frustration that "fat cats" in business and banking expect governments to bail them out to the tune of billions. Ordinary people on the other hand, increasingly feel that they are being expected to pay for the economic crisis. A national demonstration will be held in London on Saturday 28th March, it is being supported by numerous trade unions, students, and charities. **Please contact the branch office for transport details, telephone: (33) 8901.**



See the campaign website for more information
www.putpeoplefirst.org.uk

LILIAN HAMER COMMUNITY CARE CENTRE PLANS

Bolton Council has announced plans to "restructure" Lillian Hamer centre in Deane which includes residential care, day care and the Asian Elders initiative. UNISON has met with members who are upset and angry at the proposals. Several family members of elderly residents have expressed their shock and frustration through the local press. UNISON has requested a meeting with Councillor Madeline Murray (Executive Member) to discuss the union's concerns.

PAY & GRADING EQUAL PAY

All UNISON members affected by the council pay & grading exercise should have received a letter from the union at home with specific advice. If you have not received your letter for any reason or need further advice please don't to contact the union. Tel: (33)8901.



“ Inspiration is no substitute for organisation ”

DEPRESSION CAN RESULT FROM RETURN TO WORK

The Mental Health Foundation (MHF) has researched people returning to work following absence due to physical ill health. Almost half (45%) of had experienced mild to moderate depression. However there was widespread concern about discussing mental health issues with employers. MHF has called for better training of managers and clear policies and procedures.

MANCHESTER PHOENIX - UNISON ICE HOCKEY OFFER

(SEE BACK PAGE FOR DETAILS OF THIS SPECIAL OFFER)

IT'S ABOUT TIME!



THE EUROPEAN WORKING TIME DIRECTIVE

The Working Time Directive was introduced by the European Union to protect those expected to work excessive hours. It is based on the principle that in general no-one should work more than 48 hours in a week. The UK adopted the Working Time Regulations in 1998.

Workers in the UK work some of the longest hours in Europe. It is well documented that the "long hours culture" increases fatigue and stress. It can increase accidents and can have a negative impact on family life. Health and Safety guidelines always suggest that it is good practice for those working long periods to have regular rest breaks. Hospitals, transport, construction and manufacturing are areas often highlighted as examples where there could be significant risks if workers went without breaks.

CAN WORKERS OPT OUT?

Within the European legislation there has always been the facility for sections of the work force to "opt out". The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) which represents employers' interests claims that 3 million British workers have agreed to opt out of the Working Time Directive. However, research by the Trade Union Congress (TUC) found 2/3 of workers, who work beyond 48 hours in a given week, had not agreed to do so. **A recent ruling by the European Union determined that Employers will no longer be able to use the "opt out" clause. This ruling is due to come into effect later this year.** However there are a number of areas where trade unions are seeking clarification. This includes issues "down time" where workers are on duty but don't have any work to do and whether this should be included within the 48 hours.

ARE MANAGEMENT CHANGING ROTAS?

Employers always have the right to seek changes to work patterns for reasons not necessarily connected with the Working Time Directive. UNISON believes that any changes to work patterns should always be via negotiation. Joan Pritchard-Jones (UNISON Con-venor Adults) has already raised concerns about how rotas are changed within care services.

RAISE YOUR CONCERNS VIA THE UNION

If you have concerns about any proposed changes to

BRANCH OFFICERS SERIOUS ACCIDENT

On Saturday 7th February Bernie Gallagher (Branch Secretary), Florence Hill (Branch Chair) and Joan Pritchard-Jones, (Education Officer) were injured in a road accident whilst attending a UNISON meeting in Liverpool. Bernie and Florence were struck by a car and taken by emergency services to Liverpool, where Joan who witnessed the accident was also treated for shock as a result.

Bernie was released from hospital to recover at home with extensive bruising. Florence sustained a broken pelvis, shattered ankle and broken thumb and was kept in hospital pending an operation. **Anyone wishing to send cards and best wishes can do so via the Branch Office (UNISON, Bradford Buildings, 27 Mawdsley St, Bolton, BL1 1LN).**

The Branch would like to thank everyone who has sent their best wishes and apologise for the inevitable disruption caused by the absence of two key officers during this time. We can only hope that Bernie & Florence are already on the way to a full recovery.

PRIZE DRAW WIN A £500 SHOPPING VOUCHER!

Enter UIA's fabulous free prize draw and you could win a £500 shopping voucher to spend at the supermarket of your choice! One lucky winner will be picked at the end of each month up to and including December 2009. Visit the UIA website for full details and your chance to win. Terms and conditions apply. Closing date 31st December 2009.

<http://www.uia.co.uk/UNISON/Competition/>



EUROPEAN ELECTIONS 4TH JUNE

UNISON stands against racism and bigotry at work and in the community. In the run up to the European elections in June 2009, UNISON North West will support the "Hope Not Hate" campaign against the far right. To get involved or to find out more information log on to:

www.hopenothate.org.uk

DON'T FORGET! BOLTON UNISON AGM

Two Annual General Meetings will be held in order to facilitate shift workers. Child care is available if booked in advance.

MONDAY 9th MARCH

12.00 for 12:15pm start

WEDNESDAY 11th MARCH

5pm for 5:15pm start

Both meetings will be held in the Lancaster Suite, Town Hall, Bolton. Drinks and sandwiches will be available.

UNISON LEGAL SUCCESS



A UNISON member was recently awarded over £2,750 after being assaulted at work. This was with the help of the union solicitors Thompsons. For advice on any aspect of UNISON legal services please contact the branch office, telephone 338901. If possible quote your union membership number.

UNISON OFFER AT



BURY RESTAURANT

UNISON ELECTIONS APRIL - MAY

In April, UNISON members will be asked to vote in the union's National Executive Committee (NEC) elections. The ballot will run from 14th April to 15th May 2009.

NEC NOMINATIONS

In January & February Bolton Metro Branch committee agreed to nominate the following candidates.

North West Regional Seats

- Bernadette Gallagher
- Frances Kelly
- Roger Bannister
- Alec McFadden

Local Government Seats

- Marsha-Jane Thompson
- Phoebe Watkins
- Glenn Kelly
- Paul Holmes

National Seats

- April Ashley
- Chris Leary
- Lorraine Mngadi

UNISON HELPLINE:

0845 355 0845

There will be a ballot helpline from 21st April 2009 to 12th May for anyone who does not receive a ballot form or who has any queries.



NOT IN UNISON?

DON'T DELAY - JOIN TODAY

Bolton UNISON : Tel: 01204 338901/2

UNISON direct :Tel: 0845 355 0845

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BOLTON UNISON NEWS

ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE IN ELECTIONS?

UNISON believes that everyone should be registered to vote. For generations, ordinary people fought hard to ensure that the right to elect politicians is not just the right of a privileged few, but the right of everyone.

The men and women of the Chartist and Suffragette movements campaigned to secure the right to vote for all. More information on the election process and registering to vote is available from the electoral commission website: <http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/>

UNDER 26 THEATRE OFFER



The Octagon Theatre will be giving away 4000 free tickets to those under 26 over the next two years, as part of a national scheme to increase cultural opportunities for young people. Contact the Octagon Ticket Office on 01204 520661 for details.

175 YEARS OF SOLIDARITY

In 1834, 100,000 people demonstrated in London to demand the release of the Tolpuddle Martyrs. The six Dorset farm workers had been sentenced to seven years transportation into slavery in Australia for forming a union. On Saturday 25th April, trade unions will mark the anniversary of the demonstration at a series of events in London.



James Lovell John Standfield James Brine
James Hammett George Lovell Thomas Standfield

UNISON BOLTON METRO BRANCH

Tel: 01204 338901

Email: admin@unisonbolton.org

Website: www.unisonbolton.org



KEEP SERVICES PUBLIC

SAVE ROYAL MAIL!

Eddie Pilling & Ian Kilcullen
(UNISON STEWARDS)

As former postal workers we are concerned about the future of Royal Mail which is currently under threat of privatisation. There is an email petition on the 10 Downing Street website.

<http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/Royal-Mail-Sale/>

If you have access to a computer and the internet it only takes a few minutes to sign. Please note that the petition closes on 3rd August 2009.

Please give this campaign your full support.

Further information is available from the postal workers union website:

www.cwu.org

MANCHESTER PHOENIX UNISON ICE HOCKEY OFFER

Diane Kelly
(UNISON NORTH WEST)

I am writing to make you aware of a very special deal recently agreed between UNISON North West and Manchester Phoenix Ice Hockey Club.

UNISON has become the club's official sponsors. They are offering every member of UNISON the opportunity to witness a fantastic night of Ice Hockey for FREE at the Altrincham Ice Dome!

All UNISON members have to do is visit www.phoenixpartners.co.uk/guest/unison.html to sign up for a Free Family Ticket in order to take advantage of this special offer.