

**PROUD
PAST
BRIGHT
FUTURE** 



General Secretary's Report

2017



GENERAL SECRETARY'S INTRODUCTION



GMB CONGRESS 100

Dear Colleague,

I am incredibly proud to welcome delegates to the 100th GMB Congress.

I can't imagine that Will Thorne, in our union's founding years, could have even contemplated that 100 congresses later we would still be going strong – and going strong is the right term.

It's been quite a year (to say the least!) Donald Trump is in the White House, we're leaving the EU and we have a new Prime Minister and a General Election to fight. But whilst the world is in a certain level of chaos right now, at GMB we're not only still here but we are going from strength to strength.

The last 12 months has seen membership stability and increased financial performance, which once again has bucked the trend of the other big unions.

Our year in review

We left the congress hall in Bournemouth last June pledging to build a 21st century trade union from the bottom up and by listening to our members and reps. That's exactly what we've spent the last 12 months doing – taking the principles and values that have seen GMB through 100 congresses, and building on them to represent our members in the ever changing world of work.

GMB's key strength is our regional structure and the reps who are the lifeblood of our union. I promised I wouldn't disappear into National Office never to be seen again and in the last 12 months I've visited every one of our 9 regions at least twice. I have been to numerous regional and national GMB conferences, where I have not only been proud to speak, but more importantly, been desperate to listen.

I was proud to speak at our National Equality Conference this year and it was such an important time to do so. As a union we are reviewing how we can even further embed equality in the heart of our union by giving a bigger voice to our equality strands, but we are also working hard across the country, tackling the rise of the far right and the hate they peddle. Now, as always, we stand up and speak out against racism, xenophobia and hate.

On the ground our activists, organisers and officers are fighting day in, day out to get a better deal for our members.

Nationally, our new teams have come together to launch a campaign to end the Public Sector Pay Pinch, to take on bogus self-employment – our victory over Uber led the way and the headlines throughout the last year – and to promote and organise UK manufacturing.

We've listened to reps across our regions to overhaul our training programme. Our reps will now be even more ready to take on employers.

We've started revamping our online communications, with a new Facebook page, active Twitter account and brand new website which will be unveiled this year. Our press operation is going from strength to strength, GMB featuring in more column inches than ever before.

What we do as GMB members, activists, reps, organisers and officers matters. I'm so incredibly proud of the work we do. We have to shout louder about our successes, something I will make sure we do in the year ahead.

Thousands of Asda members have submitted equal pay claims thanks to the union.

Patient Transport Services have been brought back in-house by Southern Region, who never stopped fighting for our members as ambulances were targeted by bailiffs and staff remained unpaid.

Dozens of jobs saved by Yorkshire and North Derbyshire at Amey, and better pay, terms and conditions for Tangerine workers after strike action.

Birmingham and West Midlands Region continues to support and grow a flourishing care membership.

London Region hit the headlines over a bacon sandwich! And continues to champion equality, developing and delivering a Mental Health at Work course.

Midland and East Coast tackling, head on, insecure work, getting nearly 200 agency workers onto the books permanently at Cranswick Country Foods and our reps winning an award for their work.

Our team in North West and Irish are absolutely flying in the Irish Film Makers' industry, recruiting 277 new members, creating a branch, gaining recognition agreements, collective bargaining and a 6% pay rise for many members.

Northern Region leading the fight for our nuclear workers and their pensions.

And GMB Scotland are trying new ways of developing our activists through a Scholarship Programme that is, not only training our people but, growing our union.

You will also see the final report of the Women's Taskforce within this document, set up in 2013 to consider ways in which GMB could address the disproportionately low participation of women post holders, activists and employee progression across GMB. I want to pay a huge tribute to all those involved on the Taskforce and to Ann Lafferty for leading on our behalf.

It is their final report, not because it is job done (although you will see from the charts there is progress on almost every area) but because the development of women throughout GMB now needs to become mainstream core business and we will use the Taskforce recommendations to achieve this. I'm committed to that.

Our year ahead

The year gone is important, but the year ahead may be more so. Just as we celebrate our union's proud past, we look to the future and the changes we want to see.

The General Election is crucial. I'll be honest, Labour is not perfect, far from it, but it is the only party that will create a million good quality jobs, give our members employment rights from day one, end the abuse of casual employment and build the desperately needed affordable homes for all - young and old.

We must fight tooth and nail for a Labour victory later this week – I've been out on the doorstep with our activists in marginal seats doing just that.

We will fight for a Brexit that works for working people; for workers' rights fit for the 21st century and for investment in our economy. We'll make a point of tackling the scandal of insecure work and employers who use insecure contracts as an acceptable status quo. As we leave the EU, the government will have no excuse not to invest in UK industry, the excuses they used as the steel industry faced ruin.

Nothing has ever been given to our movement; we've fought for it all the way. And that's what we'll continue to do.

As for this year's Congress, I'm sorry that we've had to shorten it because of the General Election, but with everyone's help and co-operation we can still get through most, if not all, of the business.

What is crucial, however, is that you take part, have your say, tell us what the issues are that affect you and the members you so brilliantly represent. That's how we will continue to honour our union's proud past, but just as importantly how we'll build a brighter future we can all be proud of.



Have a great Congress.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim".

TIM ROACHE
General Secretary



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WOMEN'S TASK FORCE UPDATE

Background

GMB is proud of its work in the area of equality and has a very good record of fighting for the rights of women. GMB understand that a union who fights for equality for women must do so everywhere, including within its own organisation.

By 2012, around half of our members were women, however only a small number of women members went on to become Shop Stewards or Branch Secretaries. In addition, there were not as many women senior employees as there were men.

The union asked an independent organisation to talk to GMB women members, post holders and employees in order to understand their thoughts, experiences and the barriers they faced in moving forwards inside of the union.

Based on what the GMB women had said, a special CEC Women's Report to Congress 2013 was produced. Contained in this Special Report were several recommendations, one of the key recommendations was that the union should create a National Women's Taskforce.

The GMB National Women's Taskforce

The National Women's Taskforce was set up in 2013, its exclusively female membership comprised of senior Lay Representatives and employees who met regularly to look at our practices and policies across our different regions. The National Women's Taskforce talked to GMB women members, activists and employees. This work was undertaken to enable the Taskforce to present reports containing recommendations to remove barriers faced by women members who want to become more active in the union, and to progress further as employees of the union and GMB could address the disproportionately low participation of women post holders and activists within the union.

Progress the National Women's Taskforce has made

The National Women's Taskforce believe that they have done much to be proud of; they produced two CEC Special Congress Reports, one in 2014 and the other in 2015. Both reports contained recommendations which were endorsed by Congress. Last year the National Women's Taskforce provided an update report to Congress detailing the work they had undertaken since 2015.

Thanks to the National Women's Taskforce, GMB now has a Zero Tolerance policy covering everyone who is part of GMB. That means all employees, all lay reps and all members. It speaks to everyone and it says that the GMB is committed to promoting respect and equality as a core principal of the union. It says GMB will not tolerate any form of discrimination and will have no place for those who would seek to subject any member or employee to any form of discrimination. This zero tolerance policy forms a central part of GMB training courses and conferences.

The Taskforce created 'Women's Voices' videos, which contains interviews of women reps who talk about their experiences. The Taskforce have also produced fact sheets giving clear explanations of the different parts of the union and different roles for activists and employees.

The National Women's Taskforce have held highly successful Congress Fringe Meetings and created model policies, procedures and guidelines.

Other changes implemented to date as a result of previous National Women's Taskforce recommendations, are:

- Annual, issue based Women's Conference being held by each Region
- An agreement to hold a National Women's Conference in November 2017
- The creation of a new Congress Award: the Eleanor Marx Award
- The introduction of a new GMB employee appointment process which ensures best practice in the interview process and method
- The development of a GMB National Staff to Officer Policy
- The creation of a staff communications bulletin for circulation throughout the union

When National Women's Taskforce began its work it looked at GMB data broken down by gender. Below are samples of Lay Postholders comparing the percentage of women within these roles in 2013 and 2017:

| | Women 2013 | Women 2017 |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Total Membership | 49% | 49% |
| Senior Shop Steward | 16% | 14% |
| Shop Steward | 26% | 27% |
| CEC Member | 35% | 47% |
| Regional Council Delegate | 34% | 39% |
| Branch Equality Officer | 35% | 40% |
| Branch Secretary | 20% | 23% |

With regards to GMB women employees, below are a sample of job roles using the same comparisons:

| | Women 2013 | Women 2017 |
|---|------------|------------|
| Organiser and Organisation Officer | 30% | 38% |
| Senior Organiser | 16% | 18% |
| National Officer | 50% | 42% |
| National Secretary | 0 | 67% |
| Regional Secretary | 0 | 0 |

This is the last report which the National Women's Taskforce will submit to Congress, because once the GMB inaugural National Women's Conference has been held, the National Women's Taskforce will no longer meet and the work of the Taskforce will flow into the annual work programme of the National Equality Department.

The decision that the National Women's Taskforce had reached its natural conclusion was taken by the Senior Management Team in order to ensure GMB addresses all aspects of equality as an integral part of all of its day to day activities. A substantial part of this being successfully achieved will be dependent on the union being progressive and accountable throughout all aspects of its management, now and into the future.

The National Women's Taskforce have drawn up their final recommendations in the following areas;

- GMB Listening to women
- GMB Ensuring openness and inclusion at branch level
- GMB Defining the role of the Regional Equality Officer
- GMB Defining and engaging with members
- GMB Supporting all Lay Post Holders
- GMB Supporting Staff
- GMB Undertaking Equality Audits
- GMB Creating a National Equality Bargaining Agenda

These recommendations will aid and assist GMB to make equality an integral part of everything it does and be seen to be doing so, and have been submitted to the GMB Senior Management Team.

In conclusion, the Taskforce has welcomed and embraced the opportunity to observe the workings of GMB and assist in the creation of a modern union for all members and activists regardless of gender. The Taskforce equally welcome the fact that work on developing women within GMB will continue and become a part of day to day activities.

BRANCH REVIEW WORKING PARTY UPDATE

The Branch Review Working Party held two meetings during 2016/2017. This report outlines issues discussed by the Branch Review Working Party.

Branches under non-lay member control

Since the last reporting period, the number of open branches has fallen to 851.

The report to Congress 2016 identified 124 branches as being under non-lay member control. At April 2017 this had reduced to 104 branches. The Working Party welcomed this further reduction in the number of branches under non-lay member control, and noted that many of these branches fell into this category as their bank account was administered by the Regional Office, although many had lay members holding office as Branch Secretary.

The review of branches under non-lay member control should continue to be a standing item on Regional Committee agendas

Non Recruiting Branches

As reported to Congress 2016 the number of non-recruiting branches reduced to 55. At April 2017 this had further reduced to 35. Although the 2016 report suggested branches in this category with less than 20 members should be closed or merged the Branch Working Party agreed that they may be active in other ways other than recruitment, and if the Regional Secretary and Regional Committee were satisfied the branch was still active it should remain open.

Branch Secretary Handbook

The Branch Working Party suggested a number of tips and hints to be included into the hand book, and these were relayed to the Chief Accountant.

Information Technology

The Working Party were encouraged by the report on the increase in the number of branches completing their Branch Accounts online

The Working Party commented on access to membership details and requested that a Branch Secretary be given access to generate a report showing how many members were in a workplace.

Composite 18 - Branch Organising and Equality Fund

Composite 18 carried by Congress 2015 which asked for a levy to be applied to all branches to help campaigning activity around equality issues was referred by the Working Party to the National Equality Forum for further information. The Working Party discussed the NEF response but were unanimously of the view that the level of the levy being requested was unworkable and unrealistically high. The Working Party determined that the imposition of a further levy on branches would mean a cut in services to all members, would stop branches supporting current equality related campaigns and stop support for local events, and should not be introduced.

Wider Branch participation in GMB democracy.

The Working Party noted the reduction in nominations for elections to Regional Councils and for Congress delegations, and noted anecdotal evidence that this was in part due to members being unable to get time off work to attend meetings. The Working Party would review for the next round of Regional Council elections.

The Branch Review Working Party will continue to meet after Congress 2017 and will bring further reports to future Congresses.

ELECTION REVIEW WORKING PARTY UPDATE

Following Congress 2016 reference of Composite 2 Review of CEC and General Secretary Elections an Elections Review Working Party was established with members from the Central Executive Council (Kevin Buchanan, Penny Robinson, Cath Sutton, Mark Sykes), Senior Management Team (Warren Kenny, Paul McCarthy, Gary Smith), the General Secretary (Tim Roache), the Legal Director (Maria Ludkin), the Director of External Relations (Lisa Johnson), the IT Manager (Nicholas McGhee), a Regional Returning Officer (Tony Warr) and the National Returning Officer (Steve Short).

Warren Kenny was elected Chair of the Working Party.

Central Executive Council Elections

The Working Party agreed that the current procedures for CEC elections worked well and should remain unchanged, save for the nomination process by Branches. Under the current system a branch must get the nominee to countersign the nomination form, and the nomination form must be the original form sent to the branch by the Regional Returning Officer and not a photocopy or scan of it. It had been argued by a candidate in the 2015 CEC elections that this is an onerous task for both branches and nominees. The ERWP agreed and will make a recommendation in their Report to Congress on how to simplify this process.

The ERWP also agreed that all voting packs would be sent to members by direct mail in future elections.

General Secretary & Treasurer Elections

The Working Party agreed some basic general principles:

- that distribution of ballot papers by direct mail was the only option for future elections,
- candidates must be prevented from "buying" an election,
- hustings worked but not in isolation, challenges related to accessibility, geography and number of meetings,
- a pre-determined clear criteria for eligibility to stand for election was required
- candidates can canvass and campaign within pre-set policies and guidelines,
- candidates should be allowed to campaign and canvass via centrally controlled release of canvassing material.
- That independent third party, and individual social media activity was virtually impossible to police effectively,
- and that the minimum number of branch nominations be increased to 50

The Working Party discussed the last election and agreed that the election process for General Secretary & Treasurer Election needs amending. In particular it was noted that steps needed to be introduced to ensure more clarity in the process, the widest possible circulation of information regarding the election, more opportunities to introduce potential nominees to branches and a realistic approach to social media.

However, following an Employment Appeal Tribunal ruling in relation to the 2015 General Secretary & Treasurer election, and discussions with the Union's solicitors it was determined that further time was required to review the process and procedures for a future election for General Secretary & Treasurer. Consequently it has not been possible to bring a CEC Special report to Congress 2017. The ERWP will continue to meet with the aim of producing a Special Report to Congress 2018.

DECISIONS OF CONGRESS 2016 AND PROGRESS ON 2016 MOTIONS

Decisions of Congress 2016 can be found on the GMB website (www.gmb.org.uk/congress) Furthermore, in accordance with Motion 7 agreed by Congress 2015 a progress report on all carried motions from Congress 2016 is available to members in the Members area of the GMB National website and this report will be kept updated. If any GMB member or Branch would like further information on the progress of their motion or have any policy enquiries, please contact Ida directly on policy@gmb.org.uk

UNIONLINE / LEGAL SERVICES REPORT

Trade Union Act 2016

The Trade Union Act 2016 represents the biggest attack on workers and their trade unions by the Tories since Thatcher. Many of the main provisions of the Act came into effect on 1 March 2017 including new restrictions on industrial action ballots and picketing. In addition new restrictions on public sector check-off and facility time will come into effect in the coming year together with enlarged powers for the Certification Officer to investigate and take enforcement action against unions. The proposal to repeal the ban on the use of agency workers to replace strikers never featured in the Bill but was included in a separate consultation. It remains unclear at present whether it will be introduced. The Department has briefed Officers on these developments including providing guidance and training on the new rules that apply to industrial action.

Legal Services

UNIONLINE remains the only trade union owned and operated law firm in the country providing a one stop shop offering a broad range of legal services, largely free to members, and with some non-employment services being available to their families. This is our commitment to providing a quality legal service to our members.

UNIONLINE is operated from a head office in Sheffield where it employs 85 staff directly. They work with the nominated Regional Officers to ensure that we do everything we can to support members within the union. A proportion of the work is dealt with in-house in Sheffield, whilst more complex work is sent out to a network of highly regulated panel firms across the country who act as agents for our law firm. UNIONLINE also monitors and controls the quality of service provided by these law firms to ensure we have the best, most effective legal service for our members across the entire country. UNIONLINE is constantly adding services and making improvements. They operate a GMB rep focus group to gather feedback, and regularly circulate news and information to branches.

Employment Tribunals

GMB has been able to maintain services to members despite the introduction of fees for employment tribunals where there has been a dramatic drop in the number of claims more generally since 2013. Mandatory early conciliation through ACAS in all cases has also required changes to our internal procedures and we continue to keep our system under review. A further legal challenge to the introduction of fees was unsuccessful and at the time of writing is on appeal to the Supreme Court. Currently UNIONLINE has over

600 active cases in employment tribunals across the country and additional cases in multiple claims. The Department has responded to the public consultation on employment tribunals and the use of technology and the delegation of some judicial functions to case workers.

Collective Rights

We continue to brief and support Regions and Officers on collective rights such as industrial action, statutory recognition applications to the Central Arbitration Committee, and collective labour law matters.

Individual Rights

The onslaught on individual rights by the present Government has continued, as the impact of changes to the law on unfair dismissal are felt alongside other adverse developments.

Litigation

We continue to manage large multi-party cases in all areas of the employment rights field in order to assist Regions. GMB is involved in some of the most complex and large scale employment litigation in the UK including equal pay in ASDA. GMB is at the forefront of litigation in the "gig economy". Cases have involved UBER, DX, UK Logistics (Amazon), Hermes for example. Our Uber case has been described as "the case of the decade".

Policy

We continue to contribute to union policy in areas such as industrial action, trade union rights, and zero hours contracts.

Brexit and Employment Law

The vote to leave the European Union raises profound questions for the future of collective labour law and employment rights in the UK. We will aim to contribute to the campaign to protect workers' rights post-Brexit and keep the union informed of developments.

Personnel

The Department comprises Maria Ludkin and Barry Smith

EXTERNAL RELATIONS & TRAINING DEPARTMENT REPORT, INCLUDING EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL REPORTS

EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND TRAINING REPORT

This is the first year we'll go into Congress with the newly formed External Relations and Training team in place.

The team, based in National Office, brings the external facing departments and training under one roof, with Lisa Johnson overseeing the team as Director of External Relations and Training. The department includes Communications, Political, International and European work alongside Training.

Who's who and what we do

Communications, Media and Campaigns

Alex Jones started work just after Congress last year as our Head of Communications, Media and Campaigns. Alex heads a team of Jon Parker-Dean, a former Mirror journalist who works for us as our Press Officer, John Stammers, formerly of the New Economics Foundation who is our in-house designer, print and video producer and social media person and Lauren Tinney who provides a whole host of support from admin, data management and design work.

Political

As our National Political Officer, Cath Speight continues to represent GMB on the Labour Party NEC and heads up a team of Sarah Owen, a former GMB rep and Parliamentary candidate who comes to us with experience working across Parliament, but specifically in the House of Lords and Tom Warnett, formerly of Unite. Tom is responsible for Labour Party organisation and candidate development as well as political organisation in local government.

International and European

Bert Schouwenberg and Kathleen Walker-Shaw continue their longstanding work on International and European matters, which includes helping to formulate the GMB response to Brexit.

Policy

Neil Foster joined GMB from the TUC as our National Research and Policy Officer.

Training

Carl Parker continues to head up the Training programme.

Support Officers

Mel Bartlett (formerly of TULO and an activist in London region) and Ross Holden (on secondment from NW region) double up in providing support across all ER&T departments whilst also leading on GMB Young Members, giving young members a designated resource at National Office.

2017: Big Campaigns

The team have worked with regions and sections to support national and regional campaigns, bringing together all aspects of ER&T to advance our industrial agenda. It would be impossible to include everything, but here are some of the highlights from the last year - you can also see some of the Team's work by visiting the GMB National Office stand or checking out some of the posters around the venue.

Public Sector Pay Pinch

We worked across our teams to publicly launch the Public Service Section's campaign to end the public sector pay pinch. We combined the launch of a campaign website with a political stunt outside the House of Commons and research on public sector pay to drive press coverage.

ASOS

Many GMB activists will know about the scandalous actions of Community Union in signing sweetheart deal with ASOS logistics firm XPO – the fact is, GMB's campaign led to XPO caving under pressure, acknowledging that they needed a trade union. That they chose to cosy up to another union and keep us outside the gates says a lot – but despite their actions, our membership still grew.

Over the space of a year, the national team supported the region in driving press coverage, including on the 6 and 10 o'clock news, getting widespread coverage for our Catwalk of Shame and Alternative AGM report, highlighting the shocking Health and Safety record on site (an ambulance called every 9 days!) and using Parliament and select committees to put both ASOS and their agencies under real pressure.

Private Hire and Uber

Supporting our Legal Director and Commercial Services team, we have also worked with London region to push for policy changes at City Hall, generate recruitment leads and develop sector specific communications to recruit people to the union. A demo organised outside City Hall got great coverage across the regional media. Before the election was called, we were also making inroads with Parliamentary Groups and select committees on the issue of private hire and bogus self-employment.

Social media and digital coms

GMB has always punched above our weight when it comes to communications. Throughout the year, we have looked to build on good practice and reach even more people.

A new website is in development and will be launched this year, a new email tool means that more than 4x times the number of members are opening emails from the union, and we're reaching over 350,000 people through social media every month – thanks to a new GMB union Facebook page and active Twitter account. Since our last Congress nearly 3,000 people have liked our Facebook page – an increase of about 280% - while our Twitter followers have gone up by around 70% over the last two years.

In the coming year we'll be rolling out more training for regions and activists in social media and seeking to grow our reach and targeting even further to have a bigger impact during industrial disputes and on recruitment and retention.

Training

The Special Report to Congress will show the hard work done by Carl Parker in updating GMB rep training, but alongside that huge project, Carl has also been working hard to develop new forms of online training, to ensure the Apprenticeship Levy is used in the best way possible, and in finding ways to mitigate against government cuts to trade union education funding.

The first mass webinar was conducted with Carl and the pensions team in April, over 100 people took part. We'll be looking to build on this in future – not to replace existing training – but to increase the number of people who have access to information and training on GMB issues.

Policy

Making sure GMB has policy solutions when we highlight issues is important. Throughout the year the team has worked on government consultations, lobbying select committees on our industrial agenda, providing briefings to MPs and Peers and putting together research on industrial issues, such as the Alternative AGM Report for the ASOS campaign, research on insecure work and on what a worker's brexit would look like. A big focus of the work will be highlighted in the Special Report on Insecure Working.

Political

The focus this year has been on achieving industrial aims through the political process. We've successfully lobbied MPs and Peers to raise GMB issues, such as the Labour front bench tabling amendments on foster care, to GMB MPs raising the issue of Cammell Laird (which made it into the Labour Party General Election Manifesto), through to Tim appearing before the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Select Committee on agency work.

On local government, working with the section, we have surveyed local government activists to find out where relationships between GMB and the Council work well and to develop best practice. In the coming year the GMB Councillors' Network will be re-launched with a new mailing list and website so we can effectively communicate with councillors. A few weeks after conference, we will also pilot a new training course for potential councillors to try and encourage more GMB members to stand for local government – if the Tories win the next election, what Labour in local government and devolved administrations does will be increasingly important.

Labour

The Political Team work closely with the Labour front bench to develop policy, and in the run up to the election, the manifesto. On-going and long term projects including working on energy policy, Brexit and industrial strategy which we will seek to pick up again after 8 June.

The Election

In a very short space of time, Team GMB has swung into action across regions to support GMB members wanting to stand for office, to ensure funding and on the ground support for GMB members re-standing for Parliament and to support Party policies.

Over the short campaign period, we have engaged our affiliated supporters to ask them to practically get involved in the election campaign, we've campaigned to get our members registered to vote – including publishing a video online that was viewed more than 10,000 times and asking our members to support Labour and policies that would practically impact on their lives.

EUROPEAN & INTERNATIONAL

Workers' Brexit

Our International Officer, European Officer and National Policy Officer are working with a sub-group of the CEC to push forward a campaign for a Workers' Brexit. As delegates will see from the Special Report, GMB will seek to influence the Brexit agenda to not only protect jobs, but to look for opportunities to grow industry.

The team have ensured questions have been tabled in both the House of Commons and House of Lords, and that pertinent questions have been put to the Brexit Minister at the select committee.

We are being vigilant in terms of any attacks on employment rights and conditions and equality and anti-discrimination protections. Though the Government said it would maintain workers' rights that are currently protected by EU legislation, it has not ruled out amending, repealing or watering down rights once the Great Repeal Bill is adopted and these rights fall under UK-only jurisdiction. GMB will oppose any reduction in these rights, and furthermore will campaign to ensure that UK rights keep pace with any positive progress across the EU in relation to improved rights and protections.

GMB strongly opposed EU trade deals such as TTIP (EU- US), CETA (EU-Canada) and the global TISA (trade in services), which pose a threat to our members' jobs, our health- and other public services, and employment, labour and environmental standards. We do not wish these to be the blueprint for any future trade deals with the EU or other countries, and are already engaged in discussions with Government, shadow ministers and EU institutions to ensure future UK trade deals put people before profit and corporate greed.

GMB has major concerns about the lack of experience of UK Government trade department officials and ministers, with the EU negotiating trade deals on our behalf for the past 15 years. However, it is important that we seize the opportunity to try to influence the future UK trade agenda in a direction that better serves our members and protects our public and health services.

Leaving the EU means that UK will also no longer be bound by EU public procurement rules. However, we anticipate the EU will expect the UK to adhere to them in relation to procurement chapters in trade deals. GMB has been pushing to see the UK Government and devolved powers do more to implement the progressive amendments we worked for at EU level in terms of adherence to collective agreements, social and employment laws and reserved contracts for supported employment, and to go further in guaranteeing a living wage in public contracts. We will campaign to call on contracting authorities to use the new opportunities to ensure UK manufacturing and services are a central beneficiary of UK public contracting.

Whisky Workers

Our European Office organised a series of high level meetings in Brussels for GMB whisky workers to help them assess the impact of Brexit on their sector. The company (Diageo) and Government were not giving us answers about the future of sector post-Brexit, so we sought meetings with EU officials to get their view on trade opportunities and risks of restructuring. Trade opportunities seem possible, but processing (bottling etc) is vulnerable to restructuring because of the EU spread of activity/supply. Weeks later, our fears were realised with 100 redundancies announced - 70 at the GMB site in Leven

Ceramics

We have supported employers in arranging meetings with MEPs regarding threats of a review of emissions trading policy. GMB worked with industry to avert policies being adopted which could have threatened member's jobs in UK.

ELECTION & APPOINTMENT OF OFFICIALS

1 MAY 2016 – 30 APRIL 2017

APPOINTMENTS OF NATIONAL SECRETARIES

REHANA AZAM
JUSTIN BOWDEN
JUDE BRIMBLE

APPOINTMENT OF NATIONAL OFFICER

ROSS MURDOCH

PROMOTIONS TO NATIONAL OFFICER

KAREN LEONARD
SHARON WILDE

APPOINTMENT OF REGIONAL SECRETARY

WARREN KENNY, **LONDON REGION**

APPOINTMENTS OF SENIOR ORGANISERS

BIRMINGHAM & WEST MIDLANDS REGION

COLIN GRIFFITHS

NORTHERN REGION

TOM ALLISON
STEPHEN THOMPSON

APPOINTMENTS OF ORGANISERS

LONDON REGION

MICHAEL DOOLEY
KEITH DIXON
HELEN PURCELL
KOULLA FLAHERTY
VAUGHAN WEST

NORTHERN REGION

LAURA GATISS
JOHN GUY
PAUL RAMSEY
OLIVER STACK
ETAIN STOBART
JULIE WYNN

GMB SCOTLAND

UDE ADIGWE
VICKIE LEONARD
KIRSTY NIMMO

SOUTHERN REGION -

NIKKI DANCY
MICK FOOTE
BRYAN HULLEY

WALES & SOUTH WEST REGION -

HELEN COLEY
TIM NORTHOVER
NICOLA SAVAGE

YORKSHIRE & NORTH DERBYSHIRE REGION -

SARAH BARNES

ELECTION OF ORGANISERS

NORTH WEST & IRISH REGION

MARIA ALMOND
ALBIE MCGUIGAN
LISA RYAN
SIMON WALSH

GMB SCOTLAND

DREW DUFFY
BENNY RANKIN

TUC CONGRESS 2016 AWARDS

Cathy Murphy, GMB Scotland was nominated for the TUC Women's Gold Badge. Unfortunately the nomination was unsuccessful.

Catriona Goldhammer, Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region was nominated for the TUC Health & Safety Rep Award. Unfortunately the nomination was unsuccessful.

Gillian Ottley, North West & Irish Region was nominated for the TUC Learning Rep Award. Unfortunately the nomination was unsuccessful.

Jake O'Malley, Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region was nominated for the TUC Award for Youth. The nomination was successful and Jake received his award at TUC Congress 2016.

COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION, INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY AND PENSIONS REPORTS

COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION REPORT 2017

The Commercial Services Section membership stood at 190,027 by March 2017 (a number of non-paying members were removed from the membership system nationally at the end of 2016). Growth in the first quarter of 2017 has been strong and Commercial Services remains the fastest growing Section representing 31% of the membership and having recruited 42% of all new members over the last 12 months. This success was achieved through a tremendous joint effort by lay activists and full-time GMB staff overseen by the Section National Committee chaired by President Kevin Flanagan. The industries and companies in the section are covered by Bob Crosby (ASDA, Thompsons, Swissport, Gentings Casinos, Morrisons Data Services), Harry Donaldson (ASDA, WILKO), Roger Jenkins (G4S, Securitas, Geoamey, Loomis, Yodel), Mick Rix (DHL, Bidvest 3663, Aviation, BA, Taxis & Professional Drivers), Stuart Fegan (Thames Water, Environment Agency, British Gas, National Grid), Justin Bowden (National Secretary, EDF, Nuclear Industry).

ASDA Retail

The last year has been challenging as the company has underperformed against its major competitors in a tough market, although under new leadership it looks to be turning the corner. Continual changes in the stores have impacted hours and members, whilst the introduction of new, voluntary, contracts has presented challenges and opportunities. The hugely important equal pay campaign led by the General Secretary has injected a new impetus and driven membership growth across all GMB regions which should continue.

ASDA Distribution ALS;

Distribution too has been challenging as major management reviews across all operations have sought to drive efficiencies and better utilisation of the fleet. This, alongside issues including pensions, new technology and our preparations for wage negotiations in 2018 make the coming 12 months an important period as under new leadership our excellent network of Reps strengthen our organisation.

WILKO – Retail & Distribution;

Wage negotiations have been tough as struggling sales tied into a lack of sustained investment in technology has left the company lagging behind in the sector. Wilko are now investing in the future and it is vital that they do if the business is to be sustainable in a very competitive market place. Discussions on representation continue at senior level on the establishment of "Zonal Joint Consultative Committees" with the intention of greater involvement and participation from our Senior Reps and Deputies leading to better informed members and increased recruitment and organisation across the company.

Distribution & Logistics

October's court success over Uber was a massive victory in the campaign against forced self-employment in the so-called "gig economy". Opening up organising opportunities all around the economy, the Section has focused particularly on the logistics sector and companies like DX, Yodel and Hermes. Part of the campaign includes highlighting HMRC's failure to adequately challenge tax avoidance by the gig employers.

Yodel

Another year of significant financial loss (£50m) saw the closure of 5 depots, impacting GMB members. The company is proposing significant changes to pay and terms and conditions, with negotiations on-going. Preliminary discussions have begun around the so-called self-employed couriers with a view to reaching a negotiated agreement that offers employed status for this group. If we cannot reach agreement then the GMB is ready to take these cases through the legal route as we have already with others.

DHL

At the time of writing, GMB is campaigning for more generous pension provisions and protections to the DC scheme. The DHL combine of GMB stewards will meet shortly to develop further the stately that has seen increased membership and workplace organiser density. Years of under investment, bad management decisions and intense competition from so-called umbrella companies resulted in the sad closure of the DHL Freight Connect business on 31st March, with the loss of 400 jobs.

Bidvest

Activity has been good for members, membership density and the strengthening of the Stewards' Combine Group. There are now in excess of 50 excellent Reps, many of them new. Membership density has increased alongside and in 2016 we negotiated decent pay awards, along with improved t's and c's and new concessions in conditions for both companies.

Aviation

GMB have continued our campaign to seek expansion of Heathrow. The government's decision to choose Heathrow is broadly welcomed by a number of parties, including the TUC. A consultation is currently underway which our views are being sought. Aviation Ground Handling services continue to suffer from a race to the bottom with hostile competition threatening jobs year on year. Dnata have lost contracts to other GH. Dnata pay for 2016 was 1.5% on base and monetary elements, and a further 1% of the employer's contribution to the pension scheme. 2017 negotiations are currently underway.

BA continues to offshore jobs from the IT community, and in other areas of the company such as Cargo. Great pressures have been placed on Engineering and there is still some uncertainties regarding the future of engineering. BA reported further substantial record profits. And have further celebrated such by quiet indications that the future of the final salary pension scheme could be at potential risk of closure to future accrual.

Swissport

The pay negotiations at Swissport concluded in July 2016, with a 2.25% increase accepted over a 15 month period. Negotiations for 2017 began earlier this year, and at the end of March, an offer of 2.5% was rejected. We have now received an improved offer which is being considered for ballot by members.

British Gas

British Gas confirmed it cut 3,400 jobs in the second half of 2016 as part of parent company Centrica's announcement in Mid 2015 that the business would cut 6000 jobs (5000 in the UK) across the establishment with the creation of a 1000 new jobs to make it more 'competitive' in UK Energy markets. These job cuts have inevitably had a detrimental impact on our membership levels but we have refocused our efforts on consolidating the density of our membership in 2017 despite further predicted membership losses through the first half of 2017. We have also been successful in reaching agreements with British Gas around maintaining Defined Benefit Pension Provision for our membership and agreements on pay across five bargaining groups within Field Services (Service and Repair, Heating Installation, Smart Metering, Electrical Services, and B2B).

National Grid

National Grid completed the sale of its Gas Distribution Business on 31st March 2017 to a consortium led by Macquarie Infrastructure (The New Company will be known as CADENT from 1st May 2017) having previously transferred our membership to a holding company on 1st October 2016. Commitments around maintaining jobs, terms and conditions, pension provision, have been previously agreed prior to the transfer of our membership.

EDF

GMB was instrumental in ensuring the first new nuclear power station in a generation will now be built at Hinkley Point in Somerset. 3-year inflation linked deals have been agreed by our members in Customer, Nuclear Generation and Field Services.

Nuclear Decommissioning Agency

Threatened industrial action halted Government's plans for a £660m raid on the retirement plans of GMB members in nuclear decommissioning at Sellafield and Magnox. The pay more to get less pension proposals were pulled and direct negotiations with government produced a pay more get more offer. The campaign to exempt nuclear decommissioning workers from the £95k exit cap on redundancies was also successful.

Environment Agency

Members rejected the 1% uplift on base pay with some additional improvements based on performance following a consultative ballot in July 2016. However due to Unison and Prospect accepting the offer, our members were forced to accept the offer.

Thames Water

Pay Negotiations with the anniversary date of July 2016 were concluded with a 2.2% uplift on basic pay for our membership with pay negotiations for 2017/18 to commence shortly.

G4S

A restructure across G4S UK and Ireland to reduce costs has seen redundancies within all G4S businesses. Despite the current difficulties, GMB membership continues to be healthy with many opportunities particularly in Secure Solutions and on new major projects such as Hinkley Point. Discussions continue with G4S Patient Transport services on a National Recognition Agreement which will give further opportunities for growth. In G4S TT, the DWP announced 20% Job Centre closures over the coming year and discussions continue on protecting our members' jobs on this contract.

GeoAmey

Membership continues to grow in this company with a density of 80%. The pay offer of 1.5% for PCOs along with a minimum rate of £9 per hour was accepted. A restructure and 2 year pay deal for the SCOs equivalent to 9.5% has also been accepted. This contract is due for retender next year.

Loomis

An offer of a 2.3% increase for 2016 was accepted. We have seen over the past 12 months redundancies at 3 depots. Continued pricing pressures from the clients and the roll out of the major banks closure programs is causing pressure across the CIT Industry.

Securitas

GMB Membership remains low across many of the Securitas contracts and there are many opportunities to organise, the GMB National reps have put forward proposals to re shape the consultative and negotiating structures to enhance the access and communication with employees. We are working hard to maintain our recognition agreements at the Tate Gallery, and across the Tata Steel sites, in spite of outside pressures, by stepping up our organising efforts.

Gentings Casinos

A 2% Pay award was negotiated and implemented on 1st January 2017. GMB have not been proactive in this company over the last few years and there are opportunities to increase membership density which Regions have been invited to support.

Thompsons

We are currently in negotiations on pay hopefully to claw back some lost ground from a pay freeze. Due to restructure staff numbers have fallen from over 1,000 to about 770, which we are hoping to consolidate and stabilise.

Taxi & Professional Drivers

A major upturn in activity has accompanied the reformation of the national committee. Mass meetings up and down the country have delivered a simple message - GMB aims to unite the common interests of all drivers in the taxi and minicab trades. Membership has increased and many campaigns are active and ongoing. Outreach has taken place with local councils and politicians and other associations in the trades as we campaign for a change in legislation to create a level playing field and help protect good local businesses which promote and employ good standards.

International Affiliates

The Commercial Services Section is currently affiliated to the ETF, ITF, UNI Europa, and UNI International. Of note, work has been done with UNI regarding the online shopping site Amazon and its treatment of workers. Our G4S national convener Dave Gigg continues his solid work with UNI Europa on the Property Services Steering Group.

HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

Health and Safety Executive: Former GMB General Secretary Sir Paul Kenny was replaced on the HSE Board by Susan Johnson, former Chief Executive of Durham and Darlington Fire Service. An employer was appointed Workers' representative on the HSE Board. Largely due to the GMB motion passed at TUC Congress, the Government conceded its position and announced that new Worker representatives would be appointed. This is a major victory in forcing the DWP to climb down so quickly, and helps to challenge the employer interests on the Board once again. With the General Secretary, we met with new HSE Chair Martin Temple in August for a wide ranging discussion. Though we may not always agree, at this stage he seems to be someone who respects the position of the unions and whom we can deal with. We attended the HSE Stress Summit in March 2017, and gave the keynote speech at their Health Strategy Workshop in Coventry in the same month.

European Union: We attended several major European conferences as the UK begins the process of withdrawal from the European Union. Our major concern is that deregulation will be the outcome of the Brexit process. Negotiations around trade deals are less about removing tariffs than reducing international standards to the lowest common denominator to guarantee compatibility. In this light, the European Commission review of Health and Safety Directives was a mixed bag at best. No new Directives or Regulations were proposed whatsoever. But the report did conclude that regulation is good for workers health and safety, and there is no evidence of the regulations being a burden.

Policy and Consultations: We responded to numerous Government consultations including: proposed amendments to the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, which govern the work of our members in the gas industry; The Government's Green Paper on Work, Health and Disability. This suggested a number of potential policy options to improve the pace of getting ill and injured workers back into employment; Proposals to reconstitute the Construction Industry Advisory committee and reduce the number of Trade Union seats; and HSE's draft Health Strategy, and sector plans. Motions passed at Congress 2016 continue to be enacted, and form the framework for our policy and negotiating activity.

Mental Health: We continue to promote the importance of proactive management of mental health in the workplace. We hosted the inaugural Labour Campaign for Mental Health Conference at GMB National Office in January, and helped to organise the event. We gave testimony on occupational mental health to the Labour Party 2020 Health Policy Commission, and have submitted evidence to the policymaking process. We have spoken at a number of Regional Equality Forum meetings and Health and Safety events on our Mental Health campaigning, including GMB Scotland, Yorkshire and North Derbyshire Region, Southern Region and the Brussels GMB branch. We would welcome the opportunity to present at any future events either for Regions or with employers.

Asbestos: We provided support to Southern Region following the discovery that Wandsworth Council had failed to manage asbestos in their buildings. HSE initiated formal enforcement action against the Council. The Region contact details of all contractors who worked on the premises and used the GMB/ UnionLine Asbestos Register as a recruitment tool. Working with JUAC, the Asbestos in Schools Group and Rachel Reeves MP, we coordinated a series of Freedom of Information requests to all UK schools on the management of asbestos in the school system. We will be using the results to allow the National Schools Organisers to target specific schools for recruitment activity. We are also involved in the organisation of the first national Asbestos in Schools conference, to be held in Birmingham on 4th July 2017.

New Guidance: We will publish several major pieces of guidance this year. The new guide on Women's Health and Safety was launched at the National Equalities Conference at the end of February. A guide on First Aid at work was published primarily as an online resource. We also have a number of new guides at Congress, including asbestos, violence at work, Drugs & Alcohol and a shorter practical guide to the actions that can be taken on mental health in the workplace to prevent harm and provide support to members.

Security: We visited Northern Ireland twice, in October and December, to provide assistance with an issue in the Courts regarding the issuing of Notices by Security Officers. We have made a number of recommendations to the National Officer and remain in close contact to help resolve the situation.

We also met with the lead GeoAmey reps on December to discuss the poor H&S performance of the business, and how we can use the issue as an organising and recruitment tool.

Asda: We participated in negotiations on a new mental health policy. We visited the new Heston Home Shopping Centre several times to perform joint inspections, and are in discussions on a number of the findings. We have also assisted with the development new of trolleys for both store and home shopping.

Public Services: We are supporting the section in developing surveys and charters on a range of health and safety issues across the Public Services Sector, and are helping to develop a campaign on violence in schools, both from pupils and adults.

Environment: In January we attended meetings with then Shadow Business Secretary Clive Lewis, and Shadow Energy Minister Alan Whitehead to discuss Environmental, Energy and Industrial policy. We were able to get a detailed insight into current Labour Party thinking on these policy areas, and to ask pointed questions on the role of nuclear and gas in the future energy mix. We continue to lead campaigning to ban the cancer-causing weedkiller glyphosate, both in the UK and at EU level. We have also begun to develop links with a number of environmental groups on the issue of air quality, including the Greener Jobs Alliance and Global Action Plan. This included a consultation response to the London Assembly on the control of emissions, and work with a number of environmental groups in response to the Brexit referendum decision.

PENSIONS SECTION REPORT

The Pensions Department continues to see every pension change as a campaign, a chance to grow membership, organise, and win for GMB members. Often, changes to pensions causes issues that affects all workers GMB can use the opportunity to access workers beyond our recognised workplaces.

Private Sector The fight continues in defending Final Salary and Career Average pensions with notable success in British Gas, Diageo and across Nuclear Decommissioning. Where we organise and fight, we have got acceptable deals. The key always is early and continuous workplace engagement on the issue of pensions and we have delivered this engagement across the country.

The Pensions Department continues to seek improvement for Defined Contribution scheme members across recognised workplaces and this will only take further precedence in future years. We will continue to promote the opportunity to increase contribution rates within Defined Contribution schemes for our members.

Public Sector This has been a busy year for Public Sector pensions which has been influenced changes in recent legislation and ongoing government austerity measures. The latest iteration of the Civil Service and NHS schemes is firmly established and we continue to represent members via our attendance at the scheme design and governance committees.

The Local Government Pension Scheme has been the subject of greater change as it is a funded scheme and is greatly affected by government pronouncements on scheme design and transparency of costs. There is an ongoing debate as to how far scheme investments must comply with government foreign policy (this may conflict with the fiduciary duty to members), whether funds could be diverted to large scale infrastructure projects and how pooling will affect returns. The key issues for the scheme will become clearer on consideration of the forthcoming Actuarial Valuation report.

Policy Currently a number of reviews are in process around pension policy and GMB has been voicing the opinions of its members in these. GMB continue to make the argument for better minimum pension within auto-enrolment with no eligibility restrictions. GMB once again has called the state pension age review to take in to account, fitness to work, physicality of work and regional discrepancies in life expectancy. Within the Defined Benefit Sustainability review we have made clear employers can afford to pay the pensions promised and must be enforced to do so. GMB will also make clear in the growing debate around transparency of charges in pension schemes that anyone hiding charges is ripping off our members and we will not stand for it.

Communication GMB members value our workplace communications and the simplification of pensions and we will continue our extensive production of workplace newsletters focusing on specific pensions matters. GMB continues to develop its voice in the pension's community. Currently the envy of other trade unions, we aim to be to go to voice for working people on the issues of pensions.

Education Development and education of activists and all officers is key to GMB's success in delivering the best pension outcomes for our members. The department continues to offer, develop and deliver activist and officer training for every region of the GMB. The Pensions Department has been the first to offer online training via interactive webinars; we will continue to evolve how we can best deliver training to activists.

Casework The department assists with over 200 pieces of individual member issues and casework every year and continues to provide support that our members require.

GMB Pensions Department welcomed George Georgiou in January 2017 and he will be the department's lead on public sector pensions.

FINE MANUFACTURING SECTION

Membership for the section as of the end of March was 3,601. The ceramics industry continues to operate in a tough climate that continues to compete against cheap imports of goods and raw materials being "dumped" in the UK. A new national lay activists event took place in October 2016, and has now been established as an annual event. At the time of writing work was being developed with lead activists and officers from Birmingham and West Midlands Region to generate organising and campaigning activists that would hopefully start to grow this section of members in the highly skilled potteries in Stoke.

At the point of writing, the following pay settlements have concluded for 2017;

Royal Stafford Tableware: 31pence pay increase across the board

Huntsman: 2% on BASIC salary with effect from 1 April 2017

Morgan: 2% + improvement to bereavement leave

Geberit: 2%

Ideal Standard: 2%

XPO: 2%

Dudson: 2.1%

Denby/Burleigh: 2%

Johnsons Tiles have recently announced redundancies whereby the first employees will be leaving the company in April 2017 and more to follow in October, up to a potential of 89 members. The GMB is holding redundancy support training and information sessions during April, both at the factory and also at GMB Ceramics House in Stoke.

A recognition agreement was signed between Huntsman and GMB in March 2017. Reps are being trained in GMB@Work within the Birmingham and West Midlands Region in order to grow membership and increase industrial relations activity.

The Section has continued to work with the British Ceramic Confederation (BCC) with assistance from GMB Brussels office on both the Back Stamping (Country of Origin) issue and the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS). With much lobbying of MEPs by GMB on this issue, there was a positive outcome to the final vote, which took place in the European Parliament in February. This is a complex issue but directly impacts on members' jobs in the heavy clay and tile manufacturers as well as the wider cement and brick industries. This particular exercise helped secure some 5,000 jobs that were at risk previously.

MANUFACTURING SECTION, INCLUDING EQUALITY AND INDUSTRIAL POLICY REPORTS

MANUFACTURING SECTION REPORT TO CONGRESS 2017

GMB's Manufacturing Section membership as of March 2017 stood at 110,644 which is a net loss of 3,117 members on last year's figures. The continuing fall can largely be attributed to unavoidable job losses in manufacturing industries in which GMB is organized. However the section has been growing since the start of 2017. Work has started with the Section National Committee, GMB Regions and lay activists, to identify where new initiatives in those industries that are stable or growing, could deliver greater density of membership through consolidation initiatives, as well as looking to grow through new recognition agreements.

Since last Congress the Manufacturing Section National Committee, chaired by Section President, Andy Irving, has met regularly to review section activities and receive reports from Section National Officers. In particular the Section Committee has been focused on developing the framework for the new lay activists' industrial sector committees and the sections strategy for a new manufacturing campaign. These Sector Committees are being organised at the time of writing. The Committee would like to place on record it's thanks to all the shop stewards, branch secretaries, lay activists, officers and staff who work so hard in behalf of the section members.

Much work has also been undertaken to develop a robust GMB strategy for manufacturing which will enable GMB to take the argument to government and business on the key issues of, jobs, skills, investment and the need for a thriving manufacturing base in the UK, post Brexit.

The diverse range of industries and companies covered by the Manufacturing Section are covered by Eamon O'Hearn (National Officer for Food & Drink, Chemicals & Pharmaceuticals and Process) David Hulse (National Officer for Ship Building, Engineering and the Glass industry) Steve Kemp (National Officer for the Fine Manufacturing Section, Bricks, Aggregates and Building Materials) Phil Whitehurst (National Officer for Construction, and the Paper and Cardboard sector) and Jude Brimble (National Secretary covers, Supported Employment and the Furniture and Wood industry)

Food, Drink, Chemicals, and Pharma

Industrially the Section is modernising a number of key agreements, and has secured new recognition in Nestle Purina. The Section has also initiated a significant amount of national coordination of food and drink membership in companies that have previously operated in isolation. This isolation has frequently resulted in members and locations being played off against each other, and with the challenges of Brexit this race to the bottom cannot continue. Reps from Bakkavor Salads, Britvic, Burtons, McBrides and United Biscuits have all met nationally to develop national strategies on key issues and coordinate local pay claims. In the next 12 months we will seek to build on these to create effective, coordinated bargaining and organising across multiple sites. The mapping of contractors within key companies has been undertaken to identify opportunities for Regions to access workers employed by G4S, Sodexo, Eures, ISS etc. This has resulted in identifying over 1,500 potential members in one key company alone, with the Section working with Regional colleagues to identify targets, secure staff/organisational charts and agree with local contract leads appropriate access for recruitment and organising through team meetings. This work will continue across all key companies to establish a 'pipeline' of opportunities for Regions in the coming 12 months. New industrial sector committees for the Food and Drink, and Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals industries have been established, with the inaugural meetings held in late May. Supporting the work of these committees the Section conducted the first ever industry-wide survey of members to identify key issues facing our members in each sector, and to provide the Committee members with clear evidence on which to develop industry-level bargaining and organising priorities for GMB members. Agency workers, shift work and Brexit have been key areas of focus for these committees. At the time of writing Nestle had announced 300 job losses to be made at the York and Newcastle sites, with 110 production jobs being planned to be relocated to Poland. We will be heavily involved with this process.

Shipbuilding

With GMB at the forefront of lobbying and campaigning 8 Type 26 Frigates will be built on the Clyde. Work will begin in July this year, guaranteeing work for the next 20 years. This has proven to be one long battle.

The Type 26 secures the future of Shipbuilding on the Clyde supporting skilled jobs in Manufacturing and will provide opportunities for Apprentices and Trainees making sure that we safeguard skills for the next generation. Now we need the same commitment to secure more work in the future for all shipyards there are 3 fleet solid support ships to be built supporting the aircraft carriers. GMB believes they can be built in an alliance similar to the aircraft carriers this would benefit all shipyards. There is also the potential for 5 smaller Type 31 lighter frigates that we need to be pressing the government on.

Successor Submarine

A fantastic boost to the Barrow Shipyard and to the several hundred suppliers who will be involved in the programme with almost 85 % based across the UK - securing jobs from Scotland to the South of England.

A massive vote of thanks must be given to all our members and Stewards involved in lobbying government and also the Labour Party. £300 million has been invested in the Barrow site which will have a positive effect on the local economy. A new Apprentice Learning Centre is now in the process of being built on site as part of the £300 million investment which is great news. It's expected that there will be around 1,000 young people in various stages of training in the shipyard by 2018.

Tata Steel

In regard to the Strip Business, Tata first put all its UK assets up for sale just over a year ago.

It has been a long and difficult journey for all our members, but after many months of negotiations Tata confirmed their intention to stay and run the business at Port Talbot subject to the closure of the DB Scheme and the introduction of a Defined Contribution Scheme with maximum employer contributions of 10 per cent.

In return Tata committed to run the UK business based on a 2 blast furnace until at least 2021. There is also an investment plan which proposes £1 Billion over 10 years. We understand that the actions of Tata steel have damaged trust in the company. That is why we have insisted that the binding MOU is also lodged with the government to ensure that there is additional scrutiny over Tata.

Speciality Steels

Speciality Steels has been bought by Liberty House Group (Liberty). All our members are in the process of being transferred over from Tata to Liberty. Part of the ballot that had taken place was the agreement to provide a Defined Contribution Scheme with employer contributions 10 per cent. This agreement would transfer as part of our members' terms and conditions.

Hartlepool Saw Mills

Both the 42" and 84" mills are still up for sale. Things are really difficult at present as work is running out, making it a not very attractive business for potential buyers. Liberty has shown interest but we seem a long way off any deal being agreed.

Glassolutions

A mapping exercise has been started in Glassolutions which will incorporate the reps with the aim of targeting areas of the business to consolidate membership. Research into the financial health of the business prior to the talks, helped the negotiating team position themselves in the meetings. This year an offer of 2% was made in the pay negotiations, which at the time of writing, was out to ballot.

Building and Brick Industry

This industry continues to be very flat, with many employers sighting pay freezes for 2017, as the uncertainties of Brexit creep in and the dumping of cheap bricks in the UK continues to drive pressure on price and supply. We have had successes at a European level on issues which were affecting the ceramics industry, which also affected the brick industry. We are urging the government to build houses and to use bricks made in the UK.

At the time of writing, a ballot was being conducted in Forterra over a 2.75% pay offer following ACAS talks and at Monier Redland on a 2.3% offer which was previously a pay freeze. Also at the time of writing, Tarmac had made an offer of 2% pay increase.

National agreement for the Engineering Construction Industry (NAECI)

NAECI three year agreement negotiated to cover 2016 - 17 - 18, this agreement is notably the best UK National Agreement in the Engineering Construction industry, companies who operate outside the scope of it use the NAECI as a template for good practice and to set minimum standards in line with it, the base rates of pay for 2017 for an advanced craft worker such as Platers, welders and pipe fitters etc is £16.97 P/H with a second tier incentive bonus scheme valued at up to £2.37 P/H. More projects are coming on stream and GMB are robustly engaged with promoting NAECI as the agreement of choice throughout the industry.

Hinkley Point C (HPC)

HPC agreements went live on the 3rd January 2017. Despite EDF not signing up to NAECI, through negotiations we achieved terms and conditions for workers on site which supersede the NAECI. This is considered to be the best "Stand Alone" Project agreement in the UK, with base rates in 2017 for advanced craft workers working under the Engineering Construction Sector Agreement set at £19.18 P/H rising with RPI each year and a second tier incentive bonus scheme valued at £2.10 P/H. We negotiated direct employment throughout the construction phase with everyone paying class 1 National Insurance. There is also an anti-blacklisting clause throughout with all being interviewed getting written confirmation of their interviews. GMB has an excellent convenor on site, Brendan Stack, who has been ensuring that workers coming on site are recruited into the union and are working in a safe environment.

Energy from Waste (EfW) campaign.

GMB is currently running a joint "Pay the Rate" campaign through the National Engineering Construction Committee (NECC); this committee is a joint initiative inside the hospices of the NAECI agreement. We are concerned that non UK national workers are being exploited in the Engineering Construction Industry, at an alarming level, and mainly in the Energy from Waste (EfW) construction process. There are issues regarding foreign ownership, funding, and use of labour on these projects which GMB is campaigning to rectify. We are Targeting Pensions Denmark Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners who are funding projects in the UK and using their social responsibility document and the human slavery act to agree on collective agreements for all their funded projects. Companies such as Burmeister & Wain Scandinavian Contractor (BWSC) and Babcock & Wilcox Volund (BWV) are constructing EfW projects for Copenhagen Infrastructures Partners in Sandwich in Kent, and Rotherham South Yorkshire respectively. There have been demonstrations in Denmark and in the UK to highlight the poor labour relations, and we have engaged with Labour MPs to help with our campaign.

British Furniture Makers (BFM)

Members voted to accept a 2.25% increase on the weekly minimum earnings guarantee rates and 1.99% on time rate for Journeyman/women. The BFM agreement provides a minimum base on pay and standards across the industry, with many employers applying the increases to their own higher local site rates. The working agreement is currently under discussion, with a view to modernising arrangements, including discussions on an umbrella access agreement for recruitment.

The Institute of British Organ Building (IBO)

This continues to be a highly specialist niche area, demanding highly qualified skilled workers, the industry remains small and continues to operate in a highly competitive market. Pay negotiations for 2017, resulted in members balloting to accept a 2.5% increase with some improvements on compassionate leave arrangements.

Metsa Wood

2016 saw protracted and difficult negotiations with Metsa Wood, following industrial action, members balloted to accept a 1.5% increase. This year the pay negotiations are proving equally challenging with the company determined to impose a pay freeze, against a backdrop of falling profits, and an aggressive procurement strategy being pursued by major retail customers to squeeze.

Remploy

The employment advisory services continue to operate against a tough regime of government austerity and tendering processes, which are largely price driven. Members voted to accept a 1% increase, following a major business restructure, which also saw some 80 plus jobs being lost, albeit mainly through voluntary redundancy.

Air Products

We have secured Recognition for our members in the MicroBulk part of the business (formerly Cyroease) with the remainder of the workforce recruited into the GMB and four new Shop Stewards elected across the business. We have also secured negotiated pay settlements in the other 3 bargaining groups of Bay Cylinder Operatives, Package Gas, and Liquid Bulk Drivers.

BOC Ltd

Negotiated pay settlements for our members in the bargaining units of PG&P, IPA, as well as a two year deal from our membership amongst the Liquid Bulk Drivers.

EQUALITY THROUGH INCLUSION

Since Congress 2016, we have witnessed not only the rowing back on equality legislation but also on policies and practices. This was compounded by the referendum to leave the European Union, the emergence of the Gig economy and the continued attack on trade unions.

Despite these challenges, there was a truly ambitious work programme to deliver on equality matters. A number of changes took place which boosted the standing of our Equality strategy, including the relocation of the Equality Department with the industrial sectors; the establishment of the Equality Action Group,

growing presences of regional equality strand activist groups, notably women, young members, LGBT+, and emerging Black Minority Ethnic Groups (BME). In addition to this, as an interim measure, the presences of equality strand experts from the National Equality Forum (NEF) on the Central Executive Committee (CEC).

GMB now have equality structures across all Regions with active Regional Equality Forums (REF's) and Regional Equality Conferences. The eighth national equality conference (NEC) was hosted by London Region and was a resounding success -The NEC is now only second to GMB Congress. We also witnessed the sixth National young Members summit and preparations are under way for a National GMB Women's Conference in November. With continued progress on establishing regional LGBT+ Shout groups, there is a growing demand for a National GMB LGBT+ conference.

As with previous years, there was a strong GMB presences at all TUC Equality Conferences and the GMB motion on 'Race hate crime' was chosen go the TUC annual Congress.

Access to Justice

The imposition of Employment Tribunals (ET's) fees since 2013 has proved to be a devastating obstacle to access to justice, denying fairness to thousands of victims of discrimination, with a 68% fall in the number of cases on the grounds of sex, race and disability taken to ET's. The Equality department has provided GMB Regions model equality related workplace agreements which seeks to minimise discrimination in the workplace and promote fairness.

Brexit

Brexit unleashed great uncertainty, rise in race hate crime and a threat to workplace equality matters. UK has benefited from progressive EU equality laws including:- gender equality in the workplace, maternity rights and parental leave; and Directives outlawing discrimination on the grounds of Race, Gender, Disability, Sexuality, Age, and Religion or belief. The challenge remains to ensure that all employment and equality related rights are not lost as a result of Brexit. Immigration -This was firmly at the heart of political, social and economic debate. Unfortunately a negative climate resulted in a rise in racial abuse on Eastern Europeans, people of colour and people of the Muslim faith (particularly women) and the Jewish faith.

Equal pay

The Government announced a new duty requiring employers (with 250 or more employees) to publish data on their gender pay gaps, which has remained stubbornly at 9.4% (full-time) and 18.1 (part-time). Though, this was a step in the right direction a much bolder approach was needed. A GMB briefing was produced to engage with employers.

National Equality Forum (NEF4) - The NEF met on a minimum of four occasions during the year to oversee the work on Eti and a number of Regional Equality Forums (REFs) have made great progress in developing 'best in class' initiatives.

GMB Young Members Network (YMN) has actively campaigned on a range of issues both regionally and nationally. Highlights of their work included:- GMB's A Fair Deal for Young Workers- launching a government petition, distributing leaflets, publishing articles, meeting with MPs and working with sister unions to further the campaigns objectives. GMB's Mental Health Matters- prepared guidance for reps, working with Labour Campaign for Mental Health, produced a video for Mental Health week and social media shares for Time to Talk week. TUC's Heart Unions Week- creating a widely shared promotional video for social media campaign. Political Activism -sent a delegation to parliament to discuss the age discrimination in the National Minimum Wage with MP's Holly Lynch and Jack Dromey. Questions were raised directly in Parliament. General Election campaign, organised canvass sessions and phonebanks across the country, including targeting GMB members under 30 in marginal seats. Industrial - following a motion at the NYM Summit, a young members organising strategy was initiated which will imbeds young members in regional and national organising strategies, provide YM specific industrial training and produce sustained campaign targeted at young people in insecure work. Further initiatives:- Sam Fagan, YMN Chair, spoke on BBC News on fair wages for young people; Training at - Durham Political School and annual History School for Tolpuddle Festival; GMB Craig Dawson was elected the first chair of the TUC Young Worker Forum; Supported demonstrations across the country including 'March4NHS', the 'Mental Health Awareness' in Birmingham and the 'Save Our NHS' in Leeds. Social Media- Young members have grown their online activity and increased their followers on both Facebook (GMB Young Members Network) and on twitter (@GMBYoungMembers).

Equality Action Group - Following a motion carried at Congress 16, a Equality Action Group (EAG) was set up to ensure all aspects of GMB processes are aligned with the aim of improving representation of equality strands on the CEC – A separate report on this will be tabled.

Highlights of E&I strategic priorities

Strategic Priority 1 - Increase membership

EDF- led discussion on joint working on equality matters. Our aim was to establish a joint equality agreement and an equality forum. Serco – initiated discussion with Head of Human Resources with a view to establishing and driving the equality agenda. Mental Health in Workplace Guide - launched at NEC 16 and was used to train Regional organisers and activists.

Strategic Priority 2 – Bargaining

Four model equality agreements were launched at the NEC17 on Carers; Monitoring & Surveillance; Maternity and Paternity; and Domestic Violence. NEC delegates will be contacted during the year to ascertain progress in making these a reality. Fire Service Equality Group – Led discussions on improving diversity and equality matters in the Fire Service. Prevent – Campaign to highlight the impact of the Government's 'Prevent' strategy on members in schools particularly Teaching Assistants. Equality Monitoring Survey – A questionnaire was developed and circulated on equality monitoring for Commercial services

Strategic Priority 3 – Campaigning

GMB Grunwick40 Exhibition – An exhibition was launched at Congress 16 and was displayed at TUC Congress, Labour Party Conference and at a highly successful public meeting in the House of Commons. The Exhibition was also taken up by five Regions. Legacy and issue of the dispute remain 1) Asian Women are strong, determined trade unionists 2) TU solidarity action and 3) Attacks on TU organisation are continuing. Under the slogan of 'Celebrate, learn and organise today's migrants' a strategy for recruiting migrant workers is being developed. UK blood donation ban – On the issue of the ban on donation of blood from Gay and bisexual men, a campaign team was established. The aim was to raise awareness and campaign for the abolition of the ban. Campaigning material and activities have been launched. We have supported London Region protest at Sainsbury's head office on the issue of the detrimental impact on wages and conditions of supermarket buying behaviour. Other activities included meetings with Labour Party NEC Equalities Committee; London Region Board (LP); Campaigning for GMB supported Labour candidate for Mayor of London; Advised on manifesto for London; Met with Kate Green MP – Shadow Minister for Women and Equalities London Pride – GMB had a strong visual presence at London Pride. The dispute on the role of Corporate sponsors and TU LGBT groups continued during the year and a meeting was called for with the Labour Mayor for London to ensure a greater recognition of autonomous LGBT groups

Strategic Priority 4 - Enhance Profile. GMB Grunwick 40 exhibition; Presentation on EU at Labour Party Ethnic Minority summit; Labour Party Conference fringe meetings –How to ensure Ethnic minorities continue to vote for Labour, addressed by Kate Green MP, Keith Vaz MP and British Futures. Presidents Leadership Awards for Equality (PLAE) – Eight GMB members were awarded PLAE awards. Details of recipients are on website.

Challenges for the coming year, include:- Delivering a successful GMB National Women's conference; Managing the ETI strategy with limited resources; Developing and consolidating Regional equality activists groups that would lead to national equality strand groups; Supporting Regions to drive the recruitment of migrant workers; Realising the model equality agreements; minimising the impact of Brexit on equality; and Lobbying for dedicated Equality Officers.

THE INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND RESEARCH TEAM

The Industrial policy and research team came together in the latter part of 2016, to provide support to the three industrial sections, on all areas of national industrial policy, and provide the research to bolster campaign work in the sections. This has been a change on the previous structure where a researcher was assigned to each section. Key areas of work so far have included, developing industrial strategy and campaign work on the Public Services Pay Pinch Campaign, and the Manufacturing Strategy and "We're Making It" Campaign.

Membership and employer mapping conducted by the team have continued to support regional and national organising and consolidation activities, together with the ongoing supply of membership surveys that have continued to roll out in line with the National Pay Bargaining Calendar, which is designed to support regional organising opportunities on the ground. The team is providing support to colleagues across the union particularly on statistical information relevant to regions and industries; on key financial information on companies to assist with pay negotiations; and information to back up press releases. The team provide essential information for National Section Committee meetings particularly on membership information, including growth, and industrial sector analysis.

The team is developing a standard practice procedure for all relevant government consultations in order to respond appropriately, incorporate into industrial campaigns, and raise help awareness of issues to the membership. Congress policy relating to the industrial sections has been more closely coordinated by the research and policy team this year, and will continue to do so going forward. The members of the Research and Policy team have also been providing support to delegates attending international affiliate conferences this year, namely EPSU and IUF.

PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION, INCLUDING NATIONAL ORGANISING REPORT

PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION REPORT TO CONGRESS 2017

The Public Services Section membership as of March 2017 stood at 313,184, remaining the largest section in the GMB. Whilst seeing decline over the last year in membership, the start of 2017 has seen some positive growth and recruitment activity. The Public Services Section membership accounts for 50% of the total GMB membership as of March 2017, and has been responsible for 45% of recruits into the union of the past 12 months.

The Public Services Section Officers and their responsibilities are currently Rehana Azam (National Secretary, Local Government and general public services); Sharon Wilde, Karen Leonard (National Officers, Schools policy, Academies & Care); Bert Schouwenburg (International Officer, Contractors); Sharon Holder (National Officer NHS, HE/FE); Kevin Brandstatter (Police, Civil Service, Probation, Prison Service & National Organising). The GMB Public Services Section work is overseen by committees of lay members, led by the Public Services National Committee which is chaired by Mary Turner GMB President. The gender breakdown of the Committee is currently 11 Female and 13 Male. The ethnic composition being 23 White and 1 Asian.

The National Committee extends its warm thanks and appreciation to Mary Turner for her leadership and support to the section.

On the 8th March 2017, the Section launched the 'Public Services Pay Pinch' Campaign in order to end the 1% pay cap and present a robust report to government and the public. This report sets out how the pay cap and funding cuts have directly led to a recruitment and retention crisis. The report has been issued to every Government Department. Ending the public sector pay cap in this Parliament is both realistic and affordable. GMB has set out a range of options for how the Government could achieve this. GMB Public Services Section is meeting with regions to discuss details of the campaign and how the campaign can support regions organising and consolidating GMB Public Services Membership.

Local Government

Implementation of the Employers' two year pay offer for 2016/18 is on track. The two reviews; pay spine review and term time review have been established with regular updates being issued as appropriate to the sectors. In addition at the time of writing the National Joint Council Pay Consultation is just starting. The campaign established to challenge the government on their pay policy is in full swing and with a General Election looming we will redouble our efforts to campaign across town halls, local authorities, schools and across local Government to build strength and to oppose what is essentially a decade of pay cuts across local Government.

Schools and Academies

Although the Government did not progress their White Paper on last year they have not abandoned their strategy of encouraging more schools to become academies by 2020. The number of academy conversions are still accelerating at an alarming rate, smaller academies are being swallowed up by the larger academy MATs and our members are having to go through the TUPE process for the second or third time.

Over the past twelve months, the cuts to school budgets have impacted heavily on our members. School budgets have been stripped to the bone, leaving schools considering shorter days, removing some lessons completely from the curriculum and even asking hard-pressed families to contribute money and even soap and toilet roll to keep schools functioning. Many schools are restructuring and cutting vital support staff roles, sometimes without fully understanding the breadth of roles these staff cover, and the huge impact this will have on pupils.

GMB will continue to campaign against these cuts along with the other education unions, with joint initiatives such as 'schoolcuts', and with the GMB campaigns and petitions. These cuts are fought on many fronts, including to highlight the professional nature of the roles of support staff in schools, and the huge amount of value they add to pupils. While we expect the government's response to the National Funding Formula consultation this summer, we will continue to lobby government to commit to introducing a fair funding formula that will enable every child to succeed. Enough money has to be provided so that the formula supports our schools and does not instigate the estimated £3 billion cuts which will mean further support staff restructures and children and schools with the greatest needs being disadvantaged.

We now have well over 27,000 members in academies. Key to ensuring we maintain and grow our schools based membership is strengthening our structures and organisation within the multi academy trusts. To achieve this, over the past year regions have begun to take the lead in some of the MATs, leading to greater cross regional communication and cooperation than ever before, to ensure we build our rep and contact base within these academies. This is particularly important given the sharp incline in restructures in MATs, which are increasingly pulling resources away from frontline staff in favour of centralised services. Regional officers and representatives are key to challenging this.

National Health Service

Congress concluded last year in the knowledge that the government through the Department of Health intended to continue its ferocious attack on junior doctor's contracts. Though an unusual step by a government, the proposed changes were implemented in August 2016.

The unusual nature of the government's approach to doctors along with the growing, cumulative losses in real terms as a result of pay constraint in the NHS, left wider NHS staff in the belief an attack on their terms and conditions would be next.

Staff Side Evidence to the NHS Pay Review Body 2017-18 asked the Pay Review Body to in essence: acknowledge the impact of pay restraint, with heightened pressures on recruitment and retention in the NHS. Realign pay scales across the UK to harmonise all Agenda for Change points. Restructure Bands 1-3 to pay the Living Wage and maintain differentials. Make a pay award in line with RPI, applied equally to all staff in Agenda for Change. Introduce a comprehensive workforce strategy to tackle the many inter-related challenges facing the NHS workforce.

A key motivation behind the determination by GMB ambulance staff to persuade the Department of Health and ambulance trust employers of the necessity to endorse publication of a band six paramedics job profile, viewed by ambulance staff as the only means of improving a long awaited pay award for this professional group, in reward for increased skills. After a number of tactical moves by both the department of health and ambulance trust to delay publication, agreement to publish a band six profile was reached in December 2016.

Social Care

The special report to congress 2016 asked for a charter within the report. We have expanded and implemented our "GMB --We Care Key Demands" for care workers and the care sector. These include a core set of principles the GMB will be engaging on with members, activists, employers, local authorities, and government. These principles include, fair funding for the care sector, fair pay and terms and conditions for care workers, a safe working environment for staff and residents and quality training and apprenticeships for staff to ensure proper career progression for care

professionals. The GMB will continue to campaign and hold the government to account over their Spring Budget promise of allocating an additional £2 billion to adult social care and ensure that this funding reaches where it is needed most. We will continue to campaign for this sector to be resourced adequately through a robust GMB industrial and media strategy.

Justice Sector

In the Justice Sector, the Police Staff Council review of pay and conditions for police staff continues to dominate the bargaining agenda. Negotiations have been largely kept confidential, however, consultation and detailed discussions with GMB Police Staff Forum representatives have been undertaken at all stages of the process. Members have recently voted to accept the outcome of negotiations on part one of the exercise, and are now to move onto part two which potentially includes a review of grading. As a result of the Police Staff survey, members in many workplaces requested that GMB conduct recruitment visits to various sites and a number of members expressed an interest in becoming GMB Workplace Organisers. During 2016, recruitment in Regions offset the losses caused by redundancies and other job reductions, and in the first quarter of 2017, membership began to rise. National Probation Service reforms mean that there are now twenty-two separate companies. GMB remains essentially the union for Chief Officers. However, we have lost members and the group is proving difficult to replenish. And a number of the new Community Rehabilitation Companies have withdrawn from national pay bargaining.

Higher Education and Further Education

Both HE & FE sectors have been something of 'Cinderella' areas for the GMB of late. However, both - if modestly resourced - with mapping exercises - and campaigning around pay, conditions, and casualisation, are capable of modest but sustained growth.

GMB has been pressing on a £10 wage per hour, based on a £35 working week, which has resonated well with the other unions and would lift many of our members, on the first 5 spine points, out of poverty pay in a growing sector of the economy that has, largely, been shielded from the worst aspects of 'austerity'. The current round of HE & FE pay talks, scheduled to conclude in late April and June, respectively, have seen the GMB at the heart of negotiations alongside the joint union team (which also comprises Unite, Unison, EIS & UCU). This year, the unions have maintained their unity and spoken to the employers' organisations with one voice; which reflects well on their discipline and sense of mutual solidarity, as well as boding well for good co-operation in the future.

Contractors

The cuts in local government funding are inevitably filtering through to outsourced services and Councils of every political stripe are putting pressure on their contractors to reduce costs. The downward pressure

on budgets is so severe that some companies have walked away from existing contracts because they cannot make any money out of them. Others have reduced pay, terms and conditions to such an extent that their employees are on the legal minimum wage which goes a long way towards explaining why membership levels are so variable in the sector, even where we have recognition agreements. Regardless of government austerity policies, we should never forget that contractors are still making a surplus and profits gained from public sector contracts represent money that should remain in the public realm and go towards paying our members a decent wage. Nor should we forget that GMB is committed to returning public services to democratic control and that should be reflected in every dispute and campaign.

Civil Service

The Conservative majority government continue with their attacks across the Civil Service. Their campaign to outsource and sell off key parts of the civil service continues. The Cabinet Office started discussions with the Civil Service trade unions to reform the already reformed civil service compensation exit payments. After a period of consultation GMB members voted to accept the Cabinet Office proposals simply because the alternative was a worse reduction in terms. The impact on jobs in civil service is hitting GMB members in the Ministry of Defence particularly hard. The Defence Estates and value for money strategies aim at cutting 30% of all civilian jobs by 2040, closing a number of MoD establishments and releasing the land for housing.

International Affiliates

EPSU hosted a conference on Quality Employment across Europe. The conference discussed public sector pay policy amongst other subjects, including social care and successful pay campaigns led by EPSU-affiliates.

NATIONAL ORGANISING REPORT

Following the reorganisation of the Sections, the Department was placed under the management of the National Secretary for Public Services. With the secondment of Martin to the Labour Party to lead its Community Organising, the Senior Management Team (SMT) asked Paul Maloney, Southern Regional Secretary, to act as the SMT representative on the National Organising Team (NOT). Kevin Brandstatter assumed the role of Lead National Organiser, and Mark Wilkinson, Southern Region was appointed to chair the NOT.

The NOT discussed how it could focus its efforts on supporting the Regions and the National Sections, to drive recruitment and organising forwards. It made a number of recommendations to the SMT, designed to fulfil this task. In doing so, it recommended at the SMT endorse three national targets for organisation and recruitment. The three are ASDA, Schools and the NHS.

The NOT will review the success of the three targets at its bi monthly meetings, and will develop strategies aimed at introduced standard ways of dealing with TUPE transfers and ballots, for example, to ensure the maximum advantage is taken from such exercises.

The NOT will also evolve strategies to retain as well as recruit members as keeping the members we have as well as recruiting new members is seen as just as important.

The NOT will also work to improve the accuracy of the GMB membership system, especially as the introduction of the Trade Union Act places significant barriers in the way to any trade unions contemplating industrial action, and accurate records are highly important.

The aim of the NOT is to drive forwards recruitment and organising by consensus between GMB regions in order to ensure the future growth of the union.

BIRMINGHAM & WEST MIDLANDS REGION

I open my report by pointing out that although our financial membership figures look somewhat stark since the same period twelve months previous, this is purely because the region took a conscious decision to remove the Asda non-paying members that have been on the books for some considerable time. This has had no financial detriment on the region. However it does make it look as though lots of members have been lost. That being said, we decided to go into January 2017 with a clean slate so to speak after removing over 1,500 members which took us down from above 56,000 members to below 55,000 members at 54,805. Our aim obviously is to get back over 55,000 members as soon as possible to take us back up to 56,000 members. To ensure this happens we have continued to target the schools where practicable. However now concentrating on the school kitchens as the school teaching assistants have over the last few years been somewhat saturated. Apart from everything said above about Asda, Asda still remains one of our main targets for recruitment within the region. The fact that we also have an on-going issue regarding equal pay in Asda, in my opinion should see the membership grow significantly throughout 2017.

The emphasis in respect of GMB@Work is now concentrating on building our workplace representatives network across the region. The figures on organising speak for themselves where the more representatives you have, the more activity happens within the region and therefore more organising and recruitment within the region.

Our membership within the Care Sector continues to flourish. We are of the opinion that the fact we created one care branch has significantly assisted our efforts. We also find that we are benefiting from a raft of new activists from the care sector branch which again in turn breeds recruitment.

Within Public Services we continue to take many many hits in respect of budgets being slashed across local authorities which ultimately results in job losses and reduced terms and conditions of employment when services are privatised. At the time of writing an offer of 1% across public services has been put forward and we are of the opinion that this is derisory and should be significantly increased hence our national Public Service Campaign of 'End the Public Services Pay Pinch'. Staying with public services, there is still a significant threat from national government to attack check off facilities within local government and other public service employment. We within the Birmingham and

West Midlands Region have made a conscious decision to continue with our switchover campaign from check off to direct debit and our figure currently stands at 37% of our check off membership has now transferred over the direct debit and our obvious target is to achieve 100%. Thankfully the urgency has subsided somewhat but we must still persevere.

Areas where we have had a major impact in high profile campaigns are within a company that supplies some of Sir Phillip Green's retail outlets, the company is called Spectrum for Arcadia that provide the logistics for companies such as Topshop, Burton etc. The campaign is to achieve a real living wage pay and there have been a variety of strikes within the company which has now escalated from the West Midlands to our Yorkshire Region also. The mood of the strikers seems buoyant and it appears that our members are in it for the long haul to try to achieve our aims. Other areas that have been targeted are DX Drivers which is a lead that came out of the Uber legal claim ran by national Legal Department. We have now made 46 members in DX and 7 in Uber. Taxi drivers in Oxford and Stratford, we have over 51 drivers now and along with the DX and Uber, we are now looking to establish a Professional Drivers Branch. We have also recently signed a Recognition Agreement and a Learning Agreement with Belvedere Care Homes which is being used to gain access into another group of homes owned by the company along with a recognition agreement signed with IPL, a subsidiary of Asda who pack fruit and nuts for the stores. We have also attempted to organise in Amazon, again this is on the back of the success our Yorkshire colleagues had with ASOS although there is limited interest shown, we will continue with this campaign to see if we can emulate the success in Yorkshire.

On a more wider front, we have the equalities issue where the Regional Equality Forum is working with our women's group, BOSS, the Birmingham Organised Sister Society who have been highlighting and campaigning on the following subjects; a removal of VAT on tampons extending to free sanitary products for vulnerable women. The campaign to allow gay men to become blood donors, the 2016 Birmingham and West Midlands Regional Women's Conference was held in July and was a day with lots of activity and participation. A presentation on gender stereotyping and a workshop to help assertiveness was part of the day and Bangra dancing was part of the session we used to bond the group and both myself as Regional Secretary and the General Secretary took part in the dancing, otherwise known as 'dad dancing'.

We held the Black History month in October and we continue to hold movie nights within the region along with the regional book club where progressive titles are highlighted and group reading takes place along with a discussion on the particular book and we are finding this is encouraging new and especially young activists. The Young Members Forum known as Birmingham YOUF have been actively involved with areas of organising and campaigning such as McDonalds and mental health awareness. Other campaigns have involved the Heart Unions week where we used social media to put out videos of the Regional Equality Forum being interviewed in our own version of car pool karaoke, thankfully without the singing. The young members also put together a video to the Trainspotting theme tune re-writing the words to suit; choose a union as opposed to choose life. All in all these campaigns have been very successful and have raised our profile within the region.

In conclusion for my report, again I commend all officers, staff and especially activists within the region who continue to meet the constant threats that arise and turn them into opportunities to organise which will continue onwards and upwards.

A montage of photographs taken in the Region are highlighted below which illustrates the excellent work being carried in the Region.



Show Racism the Red Card



Our Birmingham YOUF Reps.



Heart Unions Week



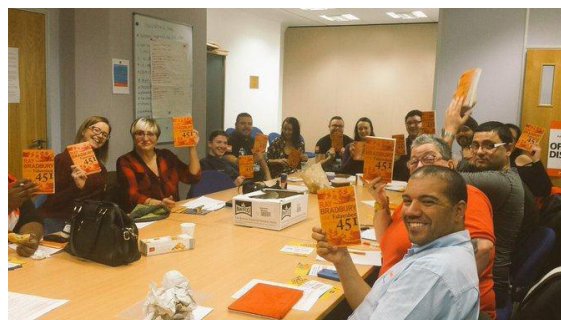
BOSS Group at NHS London Rally



Collecting sanitary products for the homeless



Spectrum for Arcadia dispute



Book Club

LONDON REGION

London Regional Branches, Staff, and Activists have adopted a **"Members First"** organising principle so that we ensure every Regional decision we make has our members involved and at the very heart of our overall objectives and as enshrined in our 2006 GMB@Work Congress policy.

Our collective aims are already driving our region forward to deliver faster, smarter more relevant communications with our members and with the outside world. As a region this will bring us much closer to the objectives set out at our 2016 Congress and ensure we are contributing to the development of a 21st Century Union, equipped and capable of organising, supporting and engaging with its members and potential members at all times.

As a Region, we have begun our new journey by focusing heavily on rebuilding and reinvigorating our invaluable activist base and by doing so we have generated more involvement in the Regional Governance and Democracy of our Union. Our Regional activity has included Specialist Training for our activists and staff, and developing new Branches and Workplace structures whilst ensuring we support and assist in strengthening our existing established and experienced ones. This initial focus will allow us to ensure we are prepared and equipped to meet, and overcome the challenges laid down by this callous and divisive Tory Government.

During the last quarter of 2016 the Region experienced an overall decline in its total net membership figure however; this was mainly attributable to housekeeping of our membership records which resulted in significant numbers of non-paying members being correctly removed from our records. In most cases those removed from our records had been lapsed members for several years.

We have invested in initiating and developing a Regional Press, Campaigns and Media department which is being run very effectively by Olivia Pryle and Andrew Craven who provide the Regional Staff, Officers and Branch Activists with detailed and supportive research, communications, and support for Regional Campaigns, Pay Negotiations and Regional membership engagement.

We have introduced and developed a Regional Political Department which is being co-ordinated by Marian Healy and our Regional Political officer, Gary Doolan.



In October 2016 the Region was extremely pleased to be able to appoint five replacement Regional Organisers, Helen Purcell, Michael Dooley, Vaughan West, Koulla Flaherty and Keith Dixon and we have since been rebalancing and reorganising our Regional industrial responsibilities to ensure our members and branches receive the highest level of support and assistance.

Training and Development for all Regional support staff is being planned with some already undertaken. We are progressing and enshrining our **Members First** strategy and progressing the **"21st Century Union"** aims throughout our training objectives.

One of many positive examples of our Regional **"Members First"** agenda has to be the tenacious campaign for our member, Aldren Tomlinson who was summarily dismissed from his job having served 15 years with impeccable and unblemished service for Sodexo at King Georges Hospital in Ilford, London.

The reason given for dismissal - *"taking company property without permission"* – A sandwich he had a prior and long standing agreement to pay for later that day!

With limited options for legal recourse to this case we launched a Regional press and media campaign against the Employer and the members at his workplace unanimously supported an industrial action ballot to support their colleague. Aldren's plight made nationwide news and he was then invited to tell listeners his story on BBC radio being interviewed by Vanessa

Feltz. Within days of our campaign starting, due to the pressure we had generated on the employer through our members and our regional press campaign, Aldren was reinstated with no loss of earnings or service and without the need to formally appeal to his employer.

UBER

In July 2016 GMB London Region brought two test cases to the Central London Employment Tribunal, to determine whether UBER were acting unlawfully by not providing drivers with basic worker rights such as holiday pay, a guaranteed minimum wage and an entitlement to breaks.

Our members gave evidence that they worked exclusively for UBER, receiving just £5.03 per hour after costs and fees were taken into account, significantly lower than the national minimum wage of £7.20. GMB argued that UBER acted unlawfully by frequently deducting sums from driver's pay without informing them in advance, including making deductions when customers complained.

In October the Employment Tribunal, in what has been described as the most important employment law case in a decade, gave its decision and found in favour of our GMB members. This campaign has supported membership growth across all areas of the Professional Drivers industry and the Regional Branch activists have been working tirelessly to continue organising and campaigning in this sector.

This will have major implications for over 30,000 Uber drivers and for workers in other occupations engaged on bogus self-employed type contracts, many of whom work in the so-called gig economy. Uber has since lodged an appeal and the Employment Appeals Tribunal has set a date for the two-day hearing starting on 27th September 2017.

Heathrow Living Wage Campaign

In 2016 the Region initiated and launched a London Living Wage campaign at London Heathrow Airport in support of the many low paid workers at the Airport who are not paid anywhere near a London Living Wage. We have members covering every section of the Airport from check in staff, Plane Handling ground workers, security, engineering, aircraft cleaning, car park attendants to retail and Hotel and catering staffs. As part of the campaign, the Region formally wrote to Chief Executive Officer raising concerns and asking Heathrow to sign up to become a London living wage employer. Heathrow Ltd responded positively, stating that they are committed to working with their supply chain, with support from GMB, to understand the impact and opportunities the paying of the London Living Wage to all directly and non-directly employed staff at Heathrow would present. The campaign continues.

Security

Following a successful campaign on behalf of G4S members engaged on the Fords contract in Dagenham, our members will receive an increase in their hourly pay from £7.50 to £9.40 per hour. While at the Natural History Museum, a campaign, by our members working for Wilson James, has resulted in a newly signed recognition agreement being agreed and signed with the company.

GMB London Region Equality

The Regional Equality Forum (REF) has been working on a number of projects, in the last year, they have written and delivered a first class Mental Health at Work Course for stewards, some 60 stewards attended two courses; this new and important training course will now be embedded in the GMB H&S Stage 2 Course.

The REF are currently writing a training course for Branch Equality Officers, which will be core training for all Equality Officers and will introduce a new supportive resource for GMB as this is currently unavailable. Work is also being undertaken to re-write a five day Equality Course for all post-holders that is fit for purpose. This will be core training for our activists and shop stewards.

In April we piloted a Domestic Violence course for stewards and we are planning to embed this into the H&S Stage 2 Course alongside our Mental Health at Work course. The Branch Equality Officers Toolkit is being reinvigorated and re-launched and our REF members will be attending the Train the Trainers course so they can deliver the above courses to our activists directly.

We are also looking at various webinars and briefings for the future. We have delivered a very successful workshop based Women's Conference and have our second one taking place on 13/14 May with 100 Women attending. The aims and objectives are to create more participation from women, taking up positions in branches and committees within our internal GMB structures and helping to play a more involved part in the governance and democracy of our Union.

We now have five out of six self-organised groups who are actively campaigning on a raft of issues around Women's Health & Safety, Precarious work, Pensions, Disabled access to work, BAME Health issues organising within workplaces, The campaign for a Labour Victory, Organising Young people.

The Region has also been campaigning and organising hard to reach workers on precarious contracts and conditions within the Hospitality and Food industry based in SOHO, Central London.



Health & Safety

At the start of 2017 we launched Regional Health and Safety forums brought together by our activists who attend local forums held in some area offices to share and work on a regional strategy for Health and Safety. Our activists bring together vast experiences and in many cases well qualified individuals who could contribute in supporting the region and its direction. Our Health and Safety Forums have been supported by National Office Health, Safety & Environment Officer, Lynsey Mann.

We have been developing awareness within the workplace around Women's Health and Safety at work, mental health awareness and the 'Dying to Work' campaign. We have also started to put together our regional strategy for the Disability Confident - Committed Campaign our project is called 'GMB Says GET Disability Ready!' Our strategy is ready and our launch date for our survey is the 1st June 2017, with a poster and leaflet to help launch the survey.

Manufacturing

We still have a lot to do to improve our membership within this sector; however we have made some good and significant gains on the Park Royal Estate project with regards to Eat and Bombay Halwa Ltd. Between them we have recently recruited in excess of 200+ new members and we have made significant progress in our campaign for GMB recognition at both of these sites.

We are aiming to ensure the Park Royal campaign is the most productive campaign in our Regional Manufacturing section for some years and will be key to our aims of delivering successful growth in this section.

Following a long campaign to defend contracts and conditions at Bakkavor Meals we can successfully report the initial negative proposals by the employer have been shelved and membership development at Bakkavor Meals continues.

Following on from Congress 2016 and our announcement we had secured GMB recognition, London Linen is developing new member recruitment and GMB recognition for their second site is now being targeted along with Kolak on the Park Royal Estate, who employ over 400 workers

Public Services

Since Congress last year we have introduced many new initiatives in the Region in the Public Services Section.

One of our main focuses, quite correctly, has been on the Direct Debit transfer. After a slow start we have progressed really well transferring over 5300 members from check off to direct debit since Congress 2016 to the end of March 2017.

In September 2016 the Region initiated a dedicated Schools Team who oversees all Academy transfers with the aim of ensuring that the Regional Policy on all transfers is adhered to securing recognition, NJC terms, and HR buyback.

This is now showing good results and has focused Officers and Branches minds on what needs to happen if we are to ensure our membership in Schools and Education continues to grow whilst remaining protected and represented in these uncertain times of endless cuts to budgets.

The Regional Schools Board meets regularly and is now being attended by more and more members who work in Schools or Academies.

Thanks entirely to the tireless work of our Schools activists who organised these events; we have also now held two very successful Joint Schools Conferences with Southern Region colleagues.

The first was launched in April 2016 with London Mayor, Sadiq Khan in attendance and more recently in April 2017 which concluded with Regional organising and campaign plans being constructed by our activists

In core Local Government we have developed a similar model to the Schools Team for all transfers including Shared Services, Local Authority Trading Companies, and STHPs. The common line is ensuring recognition, NJC terms, facility time through HR buyback. We are determined not to make the mistakes of CCT days and put the building blocks in place to ensure our members are protected and that we are the Recognised Trade Union in all forms of transfers. We have also revamped our Key Activists meetings moving away from a reporting session to a more focussed group with briefings on issues more relevant to our activists. So far this year there have been briefings on the Fair Deal for Pensions and LATCs, we have briefings on Shared Services and a TUPE update planned. We have also elected a Local Government Committee of 6 lay members 3 from Greater London and 3 from the Eastern Counties to assist the Senior Public Services Organiser to develop our Lay Member activity and rolled out a GLPC job evaluation training programme for Officers and Stewards.

In the NHS we have concentrated on developing campaigns and membership within the contractors sector, running high profile press campaigns in Sodexo KGH to reinstate a member wrongly dismissed and in G4S ambulance who expected members to urinate in bushes after failing to secure new premises.

The opening of our newly formed Central North NHS Branch will soon be followed by additional geographically designed NHS branches across the London Region thus enabling a greater engagement and participation from members employed in the NHS and its many contracted services.

We are in the process of starting a Regional Local Government Contractors Forum, starting with Waste Services to build on the success of the Waste Industries Health and Safety Committees work which is now available on the HSE web site.

The Regional Public Services section has recruited over 4450 members from Congress 2016 to March 2017.



MIDLAND & EAST COAST REGION

The Region continues to support its members, activists and branches under the Regional Secretary with three Senior Organisers with their respective teams, Central, Northern and Southern. These are supplemented with a specifically designed recruitment team, The Action Team, which consists of four officers who have been working hard this year on a multitude of projects. They play a full role in supporting the industrial teams with their recruitment weeks.

In the last year, Amey Northants schools have grown progressively. GMB now have two established shop stewards, Paul Collingwood and Garry Jackson. We have established one day per week facility time for them so they can recruit new members and also represent existing members as and when required. Membership is currently 110 members; only requiring another 40 new members for us to start discussions for an official recognition agreement.



Amey Reps Paul Collingwood & Garry Jackson

Ashfield Homes TUPE'd over to Ashfield District Council. The GMB worked closely with Ashfield District Council Labour Councillors to bring Ashfield Homes Limited back in-house. A decision to bring housing stock back in house is seen as a great result by our members.

We are currently working with Leicestershire County Council on the TUPE transfer of EWC employees at waste recycling plants back into Council ownership. We previously didn't have recognition with EWC, although we maintained membership within the company and now have the potential to grow this.

Academy conversions are gathering pace again in Leicestershire and we have been actively involved in TUPE consultations with the new Academy chains that are springing up. Recognition agreements have been signed or are being discussed with all of them at present and all have committed to applying the NJC pay reviews going forward. We have also been visiting the converter schools to recruit support staff prior to Academy status.

As with many Authorities across the country, Leicester City Council has faced massive cuts to their budgets from Central Government. This in turn led them to beginning talks with GMB and sister Trade Unions into

cuts to members Terms and Conditions. GMB refused to be drawn into negotiating any of the proposals put forward. This, as well as influence from the Region's Political Officer, has led the Labour-run Authority to review the proposals and to currently park them. In the current climate, this must be viewed as a success.



GMB Convenors at Leicester City Council



GMB Senior Rep for City of Lincoln Council, Jamie Sheridan

City of Lincoln Council has facilitated a 'Living Wage Forum' to encourage local employers to pay Living Wage. GMB has been at the forefront of this and attended the inaugural meeting. GMB suggested an accreditation to employers paying living wage and have also persuaded the Forum to include employers who do not use zero hour contracts. Senior Representative, Jamie Sheridan, successfully challenged a change to working on Boxing Day. The Council conceded to car parks being staffed by volunteers.

SITA UK (SUEZ), Waste Services, we have gained around 70%+ membership and are in the process of agreeing GMB recognition and a Shop Steward. This business is much more assured now the local authority (North Lincs Council) have moved to 4 day bin collections securing consistent contracts for SITA GMB Members. Some are ex local authority employees and we have organised here on the back of a poorly implemented 0% pay award.



SITA UK (SUEZ) members



Mike Baker, GMB Convenor, handing out cheques to some of the pleased members

226 GMB members employed at the highways maintenance company Aone+ won their average holiday pay claim. After a mammoth legal challenge lodged in March 2013 by Thompsons Solicitors on behalf of our members across the motorway network, A-One+ was finally bought to task in September 2016 and paid out

average holiday compensation of figures rising from £200 up to £7000 to their employees.



Senior ASDA Distribution Reps strategy meeting

At Asda Distribution we continue to challenge management, who are pressured from above to cut every cost that they can. This is a response to Asda's continual loss of market share to the 'discount retailers'. Unfortunately the people who end up paying the price for this constant driving down of cost are GMB members.

Having four of the Asda Distribution Centres in our Region can be challenging when we are faced with the company's constant need to make cuts and their desire for increased performance. This leads to quite a few members leaving. It is a credit to the Reps on these sites who continue to challenge management both locally and nationally.

Against this back drop it is a massive success that these four Distribution Centres continue to recruit new members and grow the membership in their workplaces.

With British Gas, there have been some major reorganisations, site closures and redundancies across the country. The impact on the Leicester sites has been significant but we have managed to maintain our membership and have grown at British Gas Business. At the British Gas Service site in Leicester, we have a new senior rep who is building a team of reps to support her. We also have appointed a new rep for staff offices at the National Distribution Centre.

We have recruited three new representatives at BOC who are currently undergoing training. Membership is at 90% plus.

Following a successful campaign, the GMB gained statutory recognition at Workplace Solutions at Both Cottam & West Burton Power Stations for all categories of workers. We now have 3 fully trained reps in place supporting the members.

After 4 years, Cargill Chocolate Products finally agreed to recognise the GMB. The Worksop site employs approximately 21 employees. GMB were invited to inaugural pay talks in March 2017 and members have been offered a 2.25% pay increase, which is currently being balloted.

Migrant workers continue to join as the GMB profile is raised and maintained in workplaces, including Cranswick Country Foods, Preston, East Yorkshire



Migrant Workers Campaign – Cranswick Country Foods, Preston, East Yorks



Cranswick Country Foods GMB Reps receiving their TUC Award

Two Reps at the Preston factory received the TUC Award for Organising, in very difficult circumstances; overcoming the language barriers and aggressive managers to secure pay awards for members and agency workers; also securing another 198 agency staff onto the books permanently at the Preston, East Yorkshire site

A milestone has been reached in terms of reaching a turning point with the agency workers despite the language barrier and there's increased density with the membership growing from 48 to breaking the 200 marker.



Norma Kerr, Organiser (Action Team) and GMB Reps at Cranswick Country Foods, Neil Wilson & Billy Seymour

A great victory for the GMB and its' members in 2016 was keeping the Hull College nursery open. The College was £2.7m in the red and, as part of the proposals, the employer wanted to close the nursery at the end of December 2016.



Shaune Clarkson, Organiser, Ann Hadfield & members at Hull College nursery following their successful campaign

The nursery staff, led by our new steward Ann Hadfield, put together a counter proposal that was initially rejected. We went back to the GMB's Hull Office on many occasions and put together a further counter proposal that was presented by the staff and accepted by the management team.

Dave Oglesby said, "I am pleased to say I went back to the nursery to meet all the staff to congratulate them on their victory. Many thanks go to the Steward Ann Hadfield, the Convenor Kev Dudding and Mick McGarry for their support in overturning the employers decision. The nursery is open for business!"

Members at Lafarge Tarmac's Mountsorrel Quarry balloted in favour of industrial action in response to the company's initial pay offer. This demonstration of solidarity achieved an improved offer, which was accepted, and was a powerful recruitment tool for us at the site



Workers at Mountsorrel Quarry, Lafarge Tarmac



Steve Brodsky & Rob Smith, 2 of the GMB Reps at Luxfer Gas Cylinders

After negotiations with the employer, the GMB have signed a voluntary recognition agreement with Luxfer Gas Cylinders in Nottingham. Membership has risen from 15 to 88 following a recruitment campaign by the Regional Organiser and Reps

Last summer, over 100 GMB members at the Metsa Wood Factory in Boston, Lincs were involved in a dispute with their employer over pay. Although part of a national pay deal covering other sites, Boston is by far the biggest location in the bargaining group.

Pay negotiations had started as normal for an April 1st settlement date but had moved past this date with no settlement. The company had offered what members felt was a derisory pay offer of 0.8% with company figures showing them to be making healthy profits. Members felt that they were not being listened to and expressed their frustrations at a series of Saturday morning meetings called to determine GMB strategy

In reality, the company simply did not believe that members would have the courage to take them on. They had a rude awakening when members voted overwhelmingly for an overtime ban and a series of one day stoppages

The first 24 hour strike on 26th May 2016 was a brilliant success with fantastic support across all three shifts and up to 70 GMB members taking part in a good humoured yet disciplined picket of the gate at any one time.



Official picket line at Metsa Wood, Boston

In the face of such a determined show of strength the company caved in and doubled their offer and the dispute was settled shortly thereafter as members voted to accept the improved offer.

Whilst the objective of an improved offer was achieved, bigger lessons were also learned. Firstly employers cannot just blithely ignore the concerns of their workers. Secondly, when GMB members stand united they are a powerful force to be reckoned with

As Geoff Burch, senior GMB rep on site, said to organiser, David Shamma, shortly after the dispute was won, "The lads won more than a pay award. The day spent on that picket line was more than a pay award. The day they spent on that picket line was the day they won their dignity back. Management cannot ignore their views again."

Membership at Next has steadily risen over the past year and is currently higher than ever. This is due to a raised GMB profile at both Leicester sites as we have been required to represent many members in disciplinarys and grievances



GMB Reps at Recticel (L-R) Mick Billyeald, Hugh McNeill, Lee Deabill, Kathryn Walters, Nigel Eadie

Following a successful recruitment drive and campaign, the GMB gained Statutory Recognition through ACAS at Recticel. We now have 5 fully trained reps in place supporting the members and a further rep is undergoing IST training. Our membership has seen a significant increase at Recticel due to the hard work by Regional Organisers and the team of workplace reps.

In 2015 we had four members unfairly dismissed from Avery Care, Lucas Court Care Home in Moulton, Northampton. They had all reported a case to the home care manager of abuse against a resident which was blatantly ignored by the manager. The manager immediately moved a male resident closer to a female resident allowing the abuse to continue. In sheer desperation the four members reported a disclosure to CQC (Care Quality Commission) whereby a full investigation of the home took place with visits from social services and the police. Within four weeks of this taking place all four of our members including the GMB shop steward had been dismissed.

We then started a campaign against Avery Care as they had decided to de-recognise GMB on the back of these dismissals. We press released the story to the media which was widely reported in the local media and press. So much so Avery were forced to change the name of the care home to Ashurst Mews as when the previous name of the home was input into Google all the GMB press releases came up!

Unionline supported the unfair dismissals to Employment Tribunal, supported by Simpsons Solicitors. The case then caught the interest of the Radio 4 programme, File on Four, who interviewed our members who related their harrowing accounts of what happened and their dismissals. All of them were also struggling to find other work as Avery had refused to give them decent references

The case went to an Employment Tribunal in 2016 with Avery settling on all four claimants before the Tribunal started. Avery also agreed to give decent references for the future. All four

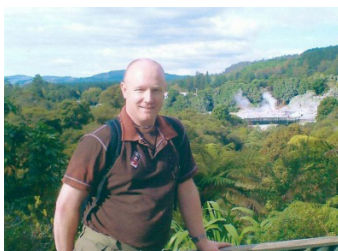


Pictured are three of the Avery Four

members have now found new jobs, two of whom are working for Brighterkind Care and are helping us to recruit new members. The other two are working in care homes in Milton Keynes. All of them now have better pay and terms and conditions

GMB Campaigned against Car Park Charges at Bassetlaw NHS Hospital Trust. The Trust imposed a 161% increase in staff car parking charges on 1st March 2016 without consulting the trade unions, employees or the public. This outrageous and extortionate increase was widely condemned by all stakeholders. The GMB issued petitions the day after the Trust announced the increases; they were signed by over 1000 employers and patients in the first 5 days. Lead Rep, Lee Hill, handed them to the CEO in front of a packed lecture theatre where the CEO spoke of the need to increase from £16.47 to £45 per month!!!

The Trust then decreased the uplift to 100% as a result of campaigning by the trade unions and doctors lead by the GMB. John Mann MP has agreed to support our campaign to oppose such an increase or to at least an affordable one



EMAS Lead Rep, Tony Davies

Membership in EMAS (East Midlands Ambulance Service) is up to 1,233. Many new representatives have been recruited over the last year. Tony Davies and Nige Beasley are doing a fantastic job, ably supported by the Branch and other key activists.

University Hospitals Leicester decided to cancel the contract with Interserve for outsourcing of domestics, porters, catering, security and maintenance and bring it back in-house at the NHS. The campaigning of the GMB against Interserve played a huge part in this decision making.

All the Representatives at Lincolnshire Partnerships Foundation Trust are doing a great job representing the members and the figures show gentle growth. They have taken part in recruitment activities with the Trust and also demos in London and Manchester. The Branch also had a stall at Lincoln Pride.



Reps at Lincs Partnership Foundation Trust (L-R) Dawn Lovatt, Dawn Roberts & Debbie Armiger

The Education Department continues to run a successful 'Class of the Year' recruitment competition each term, for every Induction course. Workplace Organisers compete with other course groups to see who can recruit the most new members

Other areas of note that have been progressed are:

- 2-day courses delivered on 'Mental Health Awareness' and Tackling Workplace Stress'
- 2-day courses delivered on 'Mental Health First Aid'
- Mental Health for Reps materials development

The delivery of this training to Workplace Organisers fulfils requirements outlined in Motions 78 & 114 Congress 2015.

- Ad-hoc Branch training

Continuing to meet the requirements of the CEC Special Report: "GMB Branches – A Future That Works"

The Education Department has also been involved with delivering health and safety/employment law information to academy students, also covering the role of the GMB union

Training Delivery

- 9 GMB@Work courses delivered to 137 GMB Workplace Organisers
- GMB Emotional Intelligence – 10
- GMB Employment Law Update – 15
- GMB Health & Safety Update – 10
- TUC Diploma in Employment Law – 6
- TUC Diploma in Occupational Health & Safety – 7
- TUC Certificate in Employment Law – 8
- TUC Health & Safety Stage 1 – 16
- TUC Union Reps Stage 1 – 8
- TUC Union Learning Reps – 10

DYING TO WORK CAMPAIGN

It has been another positive year for the TUC Dying to Work campaign which was started and is still led by the GMB Midland & East Coast



Region following the case of one of our members, Jacci Woodcock who faced dismissal from her job after she received a diagnosis of terminal breast cancer.



In April 2016, our voluntary charter was launched when a GMB recognised employer from the Midland & East Coast

Region, E.On, became the first company to sign up to protect their employees with terminal illness.

Since then we signed up a large number of employers including Legal and General, Santander, Co-Op, Carillion along with



a number of NHS trusts and local authorities. 300,000 workers are now protected by the charter and this figure will soon exceed half a million people when all of the agreed Charter signatories have been confirmed.

Many of the organisations who have signed up have been based in the Midland & East Coast Region but GMB colleagues and other Trade Union reps around the country have been working hard to get their companies signed up to the Charter and we are truly grateful for their support.

In addition to the Charter, we have received the backing of a number of influential third sector organisations including Marie Curie, Hospice UK, the National Council for Palliative Care, Breast Cancer Care, Second Hope, The European Patients Coalition and The European Cancer Patients Coalition.

Moreover, we have also held two successful Parliamentary events which have delivered considerable cross-party support from Labour, Conservative and SNP MPs which we hope in due course will help secure the much needed changes to the law to ensure people battling terminal illness have the protection they deserve



Sleaford & North Hykeham by-election

Jim Clarke from GMB Midland & East Coast Region and Central Executive Committee Member, was selected to be Labour's Candidate for the Sleaford & North Hykeham by-election.



Sleaford & North Hykeham is strong conservative area and winning the seat was never a possibility. Coupled with the Labour Party's national poll ratings and the squeeze that took place around Brexit, made it a very challenging election but Jim's strong messages particularly about local jobs and the NHS helped buttress the Labour vote particularly in the Sleaford area.



Despite the challenges, Jim did the GMB proud and demonstrated that a candidate from a working background, with local connections

and a strong commitment to Trade Union values can be a huge asset to the campaign. It is the intention of the GMB Midland & East Coast Region to build on these first steps taken by Jim to help us deliver more candidates from working backgrounds for future elections

NORTHERN REGION

GMB@Work

Northern Region is focused on workplace consolidation as per GMB@Work. Our GMB@Work strategy continues to be based on where we have less than a 60% density. Full-Time Organisers continue developing membership with specific support from the Regional Organising Team (ROT) on National Targets in Team Areas. In addition Greenfield recruitment leads and applications for recognition through the voluntary and CAC routes, are essential parts of our workplace organising. The Regional Organising Team is integral to the Region's GMB@Work process and organising culture.

Supporting the Region's GMB@Work strategy are Education and Training of Shop Stewards as Workplace Organisers, as part of the GMB@Work National Training Programme.

The Region's Finance Department incorporating Membership and IT monitoring and support systems track recruitment by Team Area. Training records of Shop Stewards are integral to Regional ROT Reporting Systems. Management of these processes and functions support regional performance. The Regional Legal Department is a key part of recruitment, organising and retention, in respect of the whole range of support legal services to members.

Recruitment and recognition opportunities from Greenfield sites continue as we try to extend our range of operations across the region in terms of recruitment, workplace organising and retention. Voluntary recognition has been extended across the Culpitt/Sugarfayre - Recognition & Procedural Agreement; St Aidans Catholic Academy Trust - Recognition Agreement; Siemens plc (Thames Link) - Recognition & Procedural Agreement; Sunderland Leisure Management - Recognition Agreement; OCS Group UK Ltd @Akzo Nobel (Felling & Ashington) - Recognition Agreement; Q.E. Facilities - Partnership & Recognition Agreement; The Good Shepherd Multi Academy Trust -Trade Union Framework for Consultation and Negotiation.

Recruitment Targets and Campaigns

The Region is focused on the need to organise around the National Targets Strategy. Recruitment activity has been focused in areas where the GMB's organising is under threat from the legislation and particularly the issues around check off and our strategy regarding migration to direct debit. Organising priorities are in Asda; School Support Staff in Schools and Academies; Security; Social Care; Energy and Utilities; Greenfield opportunities. Supporting Voluntary recognition and CAC applications has been embedded into our regional culture so that 10% membership density together with petitioners has led to better focused recruitment.

We have also continued to focus recruitment activity in Construction; Manufacturing; NHS and Contractors; Apprentices; Schools; Local Authorities and Associated Contractors.

The Region has a vibrant Young Members' Section in developing our network of Young Members within Branches, to build into our GMB@Work and Regional Equality Agenda, where we have an active Regional Equality Forum. Our Retired Members' Association (RMA) continues to provide vital work that helps the Northern Region's focus on industrial and political matters that support our regional and national objectives.

Overview of Regional Developments

The Tory Government's cuts following on from the Coalition Government's austerity programme, has meant that since 2010 cuts have decimated the Northern Region. These cuts will continue until 2020 and it is likely that some local authorities will struggle to survive and our members, their families and communities face the prospect of the provision of basic services and no more. The Northern Region economy is still too slow to show signs of any kind of sustainable recovery, and the Government's Northern Powerhouse is adding little value in the Northern Region and with no discernible regional economic policy or progress on Government procurement or infrastructure support. In addition we have had the hideous situation where some Labour Led Councils have been very hostile to the GMB over the Trade Union Act and as such allowed their Senior Executives to seek to emasculate the Union in those workplaces, something of course we have resisted successfully.

The outlook is not good for the next few years, and now that Brexit is a reality we take the view that this provides focus for much needed investment in terms of domestic support in public and private investment, with huge potential in the provision of energy and defence, public infrastructure and manufacturing.

Off shore wind, gas, oil, hydro power, nuclear power and green coal, could all be part of a balanced energy policy. The Northern Region could be a key hub for the development of the sector, bringing jobs, income and regional regeneration. Government inactivity is hampering a strategy to get businesses interested in making the move.

In civil engineering, key areas of the region are crying out for council housing and infrastructure schemes such as regeneration, new road building and maintenance. Government investment is essential and any delay will put back vital regeneration work.

The Northern Region has a really good working relationship with some excellent Labour MPs, Council Leaders and Councillors, many of whom are GMB Members. Their support is essential as we seek to integrate our industrial and political wings of our Region.



NORTH WEST & IRISH REGION

The North West & Irish Region continues to recruit at a steady level as we head towards Congress. The total membership for the Region shows a decline, this is due to the adjustment of Asda membership and has no budget implications for the Region. Our average monthly recruitment figure is in excess of 700.

Organisers, in accordance with GMB@Work, have allocated time for recruitment (20 days). The Branch Development Plans are submitted by each branch and are monitored by Organisers/Seniors throughout the year. It is vital that everything is in place to ensure our workplace reps are able to organise and recruit.

In the workplace, workplace reps know their active role in recruitment is essential to continue growth within the Region. Our reps across the Region do an excellent job and are the faces of the GMB at local level and as such are an invaluable resource. It is imperative we maximise their potential to recruit and organise.

Education of our reps plays a key role in the development of our activists. In-house delivered courses carried out this year included:

- Bullying & Harassment
- Branch Development
- Pensions
- Congress Explained

In addition, 131 new reps completed the Induction course.

The Regional Public Services membership continues to bear the brunt of the continual austerity measures which has seen cuts to services, a reduction in the workforce and a significant reduction in pay. A massive thank you to our reps and organisers for their passion and commitment that enables us to continue to recruit in these areas and some Public Services workplace Branches have shown an increase in membership.

The regional communications strategy still heavily involves the use of social media in order to communicate with members and branches in a manner that they are familiar with, whilst at the same time encouraging them to advertise and promote their positive work carried out in workplaces and communities across the region.

Our website, Facebook and Twitter accounts are all linked so that members can follow up news items and non-members can access further information with a view to them becoming members.

We are constantly looking to improve and develop our communications and we have recently introduced a bi-monthly online magazine where members can not only read the stories, but click on related items, obtain further information and videos. We send a link via text and/or Email to our database for each new edition.

Within Commercial Services, we have continued to recruit and grow our Stewards base within Asda Stores, although we have no access in Northern Ireland as

USDAW has the agreement there, and whilst it remains difficult, particularly in light of the introduction of a new type of contract, recruitment remains steady.

United Utilities continues to grow and is, we believe, purely down to the regional stance on matters such as pension changes, etc., and after what has been a difficult year, membership remains solid.

We have undertaken Campaigns with UBER, professional taxi drivers, Hermes, JD Sports distribution centre and Amazon.

In the 11 months from the 1st May 2016 the North West & Irish Region have recruited just over 8,003 new members, of which 3,168 were Check Off, 4,606 were by Direct Debit and 226 by Cash (Republic of Ireland only).

The breakdown by Section is as follows:

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| Commercial Services | 4,181 |
| Manufacturing | 1,084 |
| Public Services | 2,738 |

The breakdown of each Section by Check Off and Direct Debit is as follows:

| | |
|------------------------|-------|
| Commercial Services DD | 2,413 |
| Commercial Services C | 1,543 |
| Manufacturing DD | 752 |
| Manufacturing CO | 332 |
| Public Services DD | 1,442 |
| Public Services CO | 1,296 |

Out of the 8,003 new members, 3,104 were recruited on the WEB of which 574 subsequently lapsed within the same 11 month period. This is possibly a reflection on the number of people that joined on-line with a pre-existing issue.

The ASDA Campaign continued with all ASDA stores recruitment being revisits by the ROT in NW. Revisit recruitment numbers are a lot lower than the initial first time visits. The overall recruitment in ASDA Stores in the last 11 months has resulted 985 new members and every store in the Region has now been visited as part of the first time visits access campaign.

ROT targeted School recruitment has continued to focus around the Education and Library Boards in Northern Ireland. Within the NW part of the Region Regional Organisers have been targeting Schools as part of their stand down days. New recruits in Schools (including Academies) since the 1st May 2016 are 631.

The National targets for the NHS are now NHS Trust, NHS Contractor and North West Ambulance Service.

Total new recruits since the 1st May 2016 is 288 with the Ambulance Service (National target) accounting for 144, East Lancs Hospital Trust (National target) 55.

The NW Care Sector campaign has been predominantly led by the ROT in the North West and the Northern Ireland ROT continues to target Care Homes as ASDA Recognition does not cover Northern Ireland. Recruitment in the Care Sector was 920. Four Seasons 292 across both NW and NI, HC-One 194, Praxis Care (NI) 36, Larchwood 61, Meridian 61, Runwood 29.

Recruitment within the Irish Film Workers' industry has been a great success during the past year. The new branch secretary and the Regional organiser have recruited 277 new members, created a branch, gained recognition agreements, collective bargaining and a 6% pay rise for many members.

Following a lead from the Yorkshire region the NW ROT started organising Foster Carers. It is a difficult area to organise and recruit due to the so called non-employee status and what legal cover we can provide for these members but we have recruited 67 in the last year.

The NW ROT have recruited, organised and commenced a CAC application at Gledhill during the last 12 months. So far we have recruited 32 new members.

With regards to direct Local Government employees, excluding Schools, Academies and contracted out / arms-length service providers, the recruitment for this group is 624 over the past 11 months.

Regarding the Gig Economy, the NW ROT has undertaken some speculative Gate job recruitment. In the light of the Uber Decision, we have targeted Companies such as DX and Hermes where we have focused on the "Self Employed" drivers and we have also targeted online retail companies such as Amazon, JD Sports and Missguided. All have led to very little recruitment, just a pocket of members but we will continue to visit periodically.

During the last 11 months Officers and Branches have recruited around various issues such as TUPE Transfer, Wages, Pensions, etc. Below are companies where we have a decent return on recruitment activity.

G4S – 204
 British Gas Service – 162
 ASDA Distribution – 97
 Swissport – 94
 Matalan Retail (Warehouse) – 94
 Viridor Waste - 61
 Geoamey – 56
 Booker Cash and Carry - 54
 Translink NI – 52
 United Utilities – 50
 Ena Shaw - 40
 Engineering Construction – 39
 Landis and Gyr – 38

The circa 8,003 members that we have recruited in the last 11 months have come at an average of 727 per month.

ASDA proved to be the most successful area of recruitment for the Region and that is predominately where we target the North West ROT team. The NW ROT has concentrated on Care Homes that fit around their ASDA revisits. As we are not recognised in the ASDA Stores in Northern Ireland the ROT Team in NI concentrate predominately in Care, NHS and Schools.

Liverpool City Council's Construction Charter - GMB has signed up to four Construction Charters which ensures minimum standards for all projects chartered out by or in conjunction with LCC.

Equality reps support the homeless. Members of the Regional Equality Forum took part in a sleep out in October (cold night) to raise much needed funds. Their efforts raised £3,601.00.

The coming year presents us as a union with many challenges and I have every reason to believe we can met them head on and rise up to that challenge to fight for our members. It is vital that in the upcoming election, the debate is around the future of our Public Services. If the tory party is allowed to continue along with its austerity agenda, the NHS will become a thing of the past and our rights at work will be axed. We must not allow this to happen.

Around 91 Activists attended the 16th Women's Conference held in November 2016. This was the first time a conference had been organised by the NWI Radical Women's Network Group and the one day event was very successful. Speakers included Theresa Griffin MEP, Gill George and Felicity Dowling who both spoke about the NHS, Arooj Shah from Jim McMahon's office who spoke about women becoming councillors, Anne Keen from WASPI and Kellie O'Dowd from the Alliance for Choice. A lunchtime session of Tai Chi proved very popular and the day was rounded up with a play about Kitty Wilkinson. The play was written, directed and acted by the women from the NWI Radical Women's Network Group.

The third annual Justice Conference was held at the Liner Hotel in Liverpool in September. This included speakers from different backgrounds and walks of life but who all share the common goal of seeking justice. The two day event was opened by the Liverpool Mayor, Joe Anderson, and we had speakers from the following campaigns: Orgreave: Truth and Justice, Blacklisting, Justice for Joseph, WASPI and Hillsborough. Peter Tatchell spoke about alternative views on anti-austerity and Geoff Shears gave a heart-warming tribute to the late Davey Hopper. Davey was a very good friend of the region and attended all our conferences and of course he was very much missed. We also had Richard Oliver, an Organiser from Midland and East Coast Region who spoke about the "Dying to Work" campaign which has had a knock on effect in the region with several authorities signing up to this.

GMB SCOTLAND

Since our last Congress, sticking by the three priorities for GMB Scotland has stood us in good stead. The priorities remain our mission, performance and the culture of the organisation.

The political situation in Scotland is complex and we have been clear; politics is a means to an end and what always comes first is the interests of our membership not party political considerations.

We remain totally focused on the workplace, jobs and our member's needs and aspirations. In all the campaigns we have undertaken, the communications we have put out and in the huge amount of media coverage we have generated we always emphasise our core business and mission is about jobs, work and defending our member's interests.

The focus on our core business has no doubt helped our performance. Whilst the wider Scottish trade union movement continues to haemorrhage members, in 2015 we stabilised ours and after a decade of almost uninterrupted decline actually posted a small growth at the end of 2015 (the growth came despite removing circa 800 non-financial ASDA members).

We have started 2016 strongly, improving our recruitment performance and very importantly retention too. For the first time in many years GMB Scotland has grown in 3 consecutive months and at the time of submitting this report GMB Scotland is due to grow again in May.

For GMB Scotland retention starts in the workplace. Our lay activists have done a great job over many years supporting our members despite the fact we have not properly invested in activist development and training. The employment of an in house Education and Equalities Officer is a sign of our commitment to our lay activists. By properly investing in our lay activists we envisage that over the next year we will make further strides in our recruitment and retention performance.

Vital to the step change in performance in GMB Scotland has been a resolve to campaign on issues that affect our members in the workplace and a huge emphasis on communication with the membership.

All our employees are now able to communicate quickly and effectively through text and email. The communications department has supported this work whilst producing campaign materials and very importantly ensuring we are the highest profile union in Scotland.

The campaigns and disputes we have been involved in are too numerous to list but some of the most notable have been in Glasgow City Council and the associated arms length organisations like Cordia; over austerity in our public services, against proposed cuts to pay and conditions on Orkney; securing recognition at Fergusons shipyard and at Diageo where we had a successful campaign over pensions.

At a recent Scottish Activists Conference campaigning was agreed as an area we needed to continue to focus on in the year ahead. It is clear that our activists see campaigning and with it making a difference in the workplace as vital in continuing to grow the organisation.

Over the next period we will intensify our focus on campaigning, investing in our activists and employees to ensure they are equipped with the skills they need to undertake successful campaigns.

In addition to the industrial campaigns GMB Scotland has also commissioned a number of reports in support of key industries where we organise or where we believe there is potential. We have used heavy weight academic bodies or industry experts to compile the reports we have done.

The reports on Defence Manufacturing, North Sea Decommissioning and most recently the Future of Gas in Scotland are available on the GMB Scotland website. These reports have been very important in cementing the position of GMB Scotland as a high profile and credible voice for our members in Scotland.

In what has been a period of massive change in GMB Scotland an absolute given has been the continued support of our fantastically loyal activists. One of the most significant projects our activists have supported is the establishment of a 'Scholarship Programme' funded with the support of branches.

The scholarship is designed to improve our activists skills, give them an insight into the future role of full time officers and to allow our activists to more effectively compete when jobs in the union became available. At the time of writing we are half way through the Scholarship Programme.

There are many lessons for us as an organisation around setting up the scholarship but the feedback from those involved has been hugely positive. In turn the Scholarship Programme has also had a profound effect on the performance of GMB Scotland. There is

no doubt our activists seconded on the programme have demonstrated that with a little investment they are amongst the best in the Scottish trade union movement.

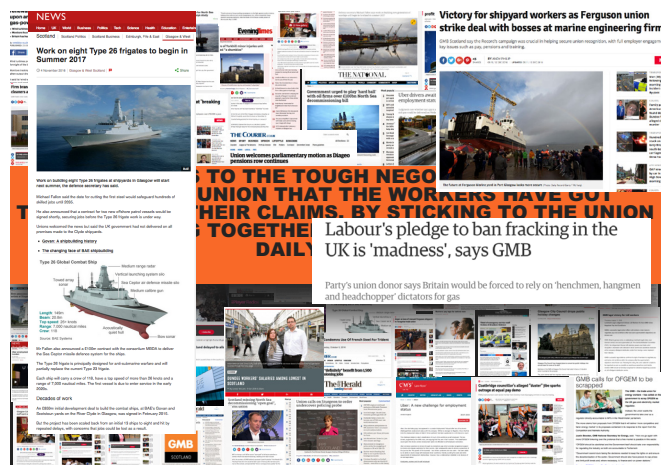
If an organisation is going to be successful, campaign and grow, it must have a positive and understood culture at its core. Equalities are central to developing a positive culture and ensuring the union looks like modern Scotland. As part of our commitment to changing the culture in the organisation we have begun to invest in the equalities agenda.

Since we last met GMB Scotland has held its first ever Women's Conference, run by and for women. In addition there has been a Women's Leadership Development Event. The development of future women leaders is about equality but also about the future performance of the union. The fact is, top performing organisations have senior women playing key roles. Whilst recognising that we have made some progress on equalities we also have to acknowledge that there is a long way to go across the equality strands.

The chair of our Regional Equalities Forum, Annette Drylie, deserves great personal credit for making sure we keep a focus on the whole equalities agenda in a period of huge change. In the coming years we will continue to invest in equalities as part of our ongoing work to create a positive culture in GMB Scotland.

GMB Scotland has gone through a period of huge change over the past period. Change was needed to reverse decline and continuing to invest in further changes will be essential as we look to build on our improved performance of the past year.

Ultimately the improved performance and change in the performance of GMB Scotland is down to our dedicated lay activists and employees. They deserve the credit and thanks for supporting their union and wanting to make a difference for our members at work. In the year ahead we will stick to our key principles, whilst looking to continuously improve all that we do as we seek to build GMB Scotland.



SOUTHERN REGION

Since Congress last year, the Region has grown in membership through progressive and planned organising and recruitment. The Region has taken on hostile employers, with some notable successes and we continue to ensure that workers who choose to join the GMB will get the full support and representation in pursuit of formal recognition, either voluntary or compulsory.

Our members in Public Services are again at the sharp end of austerity and government cuts.

The Ambulance Service. We see the wholesale privatisation of patient transport where private companies, very much linked to the Conservatives Party, are being awarded contracts which go wrong in the first couple of months, costing staff loss of wages, terms and conditions and regularly their livelihoods, and the cost to the taxpayer runs into millions of pounds every time these go wrong. Along the South Coast of England, particularly in East and West Sussex, and Kent, the GMB has successfully fought off this privatisation, which led to the patient transport services being brought back in-house. We, as a union, have to be fearless and ferocious in our approach to this type of privatisation through the back door, often using local Clinical Commissioning Groups.

Hospitals. The privatisation of ancillary services goes on unabated, without any government support and again to the detriment of the staff and GMB members. GMB in Southern Region are adamant that we will take on any exploiting employers who use our members' wages for their profit.

Education. With the push towards private schools and academies and the lack of funding in education, we now see a daily event of redundancies, job re-profiling and cuts in pay. The Region has taken these issues face on which has led to days of strike action in support of jobs and services and we have had some notable successes.

Care Sector. Right across the Region where as many as 30 publically owned care homes operated in each county, the result of privatisation has led to the vast majority of homes being closed and those that remained open are in the hands of some dodgy private care providers. Where these relationships exist, we work with them to ensure that they both survive and provide good care whilst maintaining good terms and conditions for GMB members.





Our Regional policies on TUPE transfers. We systematically re-sign all members so that union recognition transfers and we aim to recruit new members on the back of those transfers. We rarely fail to increase membership.

Another Regional policy is on Ballots, where we first ask our members what they would like to see in their pay claim. We keep them informed of negotiations and then offer a ballot to members on the outcome of negotiations. These ballots are conducted in a very open manner in the workplace, which again leads to membership growth.

We take high profiles places in the media to ensure we highlight the plight of our members where they are suffering at the hands of unscrupulous employers.

Of course the Gig economy cannot be forgotten, with the curse of bogus self-employment, zero hour contracts, which leads to job insecurity, low pay, no holiday pay, etc. This is a tough economy to crack because, in general, workers are in fear of losing what they have got, whilst not know what they are entitled to, but we will be relentless in our approach to organising the workforces.

The Region recently had our Regional Committee elections which, for the first time in the history of the Region, elected five women members and we have two black and ethnic members and one young member. This is indeed progress towards equalities. In recent years we have progressed to eleven female Officers, including our Regional Legal Officer, and from our female workforce we have seven in managerial positions up to Senior Officer level.

Our Annual Regional Women's Conference is now a vibrant, lasting memorable event and is well attended.

We have an active and vibrant Regional Equalities Forum that links to the National and TUC Forums and activities.

We are in the process of an "e" magazine for distribution to our members through our regular communications.

PAUL MALONEY
Regional Secretary



GMB WALES & SOUTH WEST REGION

Once again, in the interim period since Congress 2016, the Region has achieved modest recruitment and membership growth. Much of our success has been attributable to the emphasis placed upon GMB@WORK principles and organising strategy that underpins them.



The General Secretary, Regional Secretary and Students at a GMB@Work Course, held in Regional Office, Cardiff on the 13 January 2017

Commercial Services

ASDA - Year end 2016 figures for ASDA Retail were 704, which placed us as the third highest recruiting Region. We will now concentrate on developing membership and retaining any lapsed members, in accordance with the regional strategy. We are presently promoting the Equal Pay claim process which will hopefully gain interest and improve membership density within Stores. At present, in excess of 200 new equal pay claims have been referred to Leigh Day, Solicitors.

Taxi and Professional Drivers - We are currently organising within this group. De-regulation in the last year or so, has brought increased pressures and demands. As a result there are genuine fears for safety of the public (because of the flood of licensing issues from outside of the local authority boundaries), and the drive down in earnings because of mass competition has also resulted in an increased amount of hours for drivers (with little or no reward). The challenge of Uberisation of the sector is one that cannot be ignored. We are currently targeting Dragon Taxis and undertaking maintenance site visits most Wednesdays, where Drivers, in accordance with their terms and conditions must attend the site to undertake basic checks on their vehicles. This has proven successful in raising the awareness of the GMB.

Vinci Facilities – These were the successful bidders within Welsh Government covering security and cleaning staff. Due to increased pressure on Vinci management we have been able to negotiate access to staff across the Welsh Government sites and have increased membership thus far within security and cleaning. The campaign will continue over the coming months. Vinci have agreed a voluntary arrangement between GMB and the Company, details to be confirmed, however, the Company are not accepting a recognition agreement at this time but have agreed the appointing of GMB Workplace Organisers within Welsh Government sites.

Utilities HPC - We have currently undertaken a site visit and talks are underway regarding facility time for Work Place Organisers and Health and Safety Representatives. We have completed a mapping exercise in order to determine actual potential membership levels within Hinckley Point C. This is a vast project, where the GMB will be totally involved from build to closure. We have introduced seven Workplace Organisers onto the site for G4S and will organise amongst other relevant groups as the various work streams open up.

Security - We feel there is very good potential for growth within the Security Industry. Membership remains strong within the Region and initiatives are in place to boost recruitment during the next twelve months. The Branch Secretary within Security is very active but the Branch needs to develop a larger network of Workplace Organisers in order to establish a larger support mechanism for members across the Region so we will be working with the Branch Secretary to initiate the production of a Security Newsletter and also establish a Regional Security Forum for our Workplace Organisers within the Industry.

Lidl Stores - The Region's campaign to gain recognition at the Lidl Bridgend RDC, continues in the face of hostile opposition from the Company, despite successful arguing of our case in the CAC hearing in May 2016, we were forced to defend our position and members rights to collective bargaining in the High Court, following Lidl's application for a judicial review. The High Court also ruled in the GMB's favour, a landmark decision, which attracted both national and local media coverage despite two resounding defeats. Lidl applied to the Court of Appeal who again rejected LIDL's claim that the CAC were incorrect in agreeing the GMB's definition of the bargaining unit. We should now be able to proceed to a recognition ballot, and our strategy for success will now be developed.



The Regional Secretary and GMB Staff demonstrating outside Lidl Distribution Centre, Bridgend, South Wales

Manufacturing

Steinhoff - Membership has increased sufficiently for us to

approach the Company to open negotiations on a voluntary recognition agreement. Talks at local level continue and, if required, ACAS will be used to assist. Should we be unable to secure a voluntary recognition agreement, a CAC application will be completed.

Appledore Shipbuilders - GMB continues to be the leading and predominant Union at Appledore. The local district of the CSEU, led by Matt Roberts, is leading a campaign to secure more work for Appledore and Falmouth Docks, which has been highlighted and praised by the national CSEU. The latest rumours are that the Irish might order a fifth ship, which would secure the medium term future of Appledore. The Regional Political Officer is arranging for the Shadow Defence Minister to meet with the Officer and representatives in respect of campaigning for work.

Devonport Royal Dockyard - We currently have a team of thirty-one Workplace Organisers, two Convenors and two Deputy Convenors in representing Craft and Non-Craft labour. Additional training has recently been offered, and the two Convenors continue to try and push the organising agenda with the team on site. Pay negotiations again loom, as the current three year deal approaches its end. Relations with the Unite Union on site continue to be prickly at times, but have improved from the industrial action period two years ago. The Officer is currently supporting the Convenors to deal with a failure to agree on contract changes imposed without consultation. This may lead to GMB and Unite looking at consultatively balloting for industrial action unless HR start to seriously address the issue. There are also issues within the Warships Business Unit around use of CCTV which the Officer has been supporting the Convenors on.

Hinkley Point Nuclear Plant - This long overdue agreement to build this plant has finally been given the go ahead by the Government. It will be the biggest building project in Europe over the next twenty years. It will create thousands of highly skilled jobs during the construction and permanent employment for the life time of the plant. Jobs will be created in catering/security/construction for many years to come and will support local and national employment as the project moves through the different elements of the building process until completion. Recruitment campaigns will be organised as and when the different phases of this project unfold. The Regional Organiser, Adie Baker, will be planning and organising recruitment campaigns with the appointment of new Workplace Organisers being a priority in all areas where we have an input.

Bailey Caravans, Bristol - The local pay deal has been extremely difficult this year and the members determined to secure a decent pay award outcome. With the support of the Organiser, Adie Baker, and the strong support of the members a much better pay award was secured which resulted in a new grading structure being put in place which rewarded employees for multi-tasking. The campaign for a better pay award resulted in recruiting 50 new members and a high profile for the GMB.

Norgine Pharmaceuticals - This Company, based in Hengoed in South Wales, has an extensive pan-European presence. There have been issues regarding pay and bonuses, which has been a catalyst for improving membership from twenty eight members in September 2016 to forty three in March 2017. We are hopeful that if the membership continues to increase that we may be in a position sometime in the future to consider a campaign for a recognition agreement.

The Region has advised the National Officer for Manufacturing that they are prepared to take part in a 'Making It' film campaign to promote the British manufacturing industry. Companies and local activists in the region have agreed to take part in promoting UK manufacturing.

Equality - LGBT Events

Bristol Pride – 9 July 2016

Thousands of people brought colour to the centre of Bristol with the 2016 Pride parade. The marches set off from Castle Park at 11.00 am and wound their way around Broadmead before heading over to the Lloyds Amphitheatre with free goodie bags and free all day entry. As sponsors of the event for the second year running, the main stage was festooned with GMB flags, bunting, and banners.

Pride Cymru – 13 August 2016

More than 2,500 people joined the parade, which weaved its way along some of the city's busiest streets, as hundreds of flag-bearing shoppers and supporters lined the streets of Cardiff city centre amidst a riot of colour and fun. GMB kept the flag flying.



Branch Representatives and Members, together with GMB Staff taking part in Pride Cymru 2016

Women's Conferences – On the 10 September 2016 the first Women's Conference was held in the Region, which was a great success. The Women's Conference for 2017 was held on the 8 March 2017, to coincide with International Women's Day, and was well attended.

The Regional Equality Conference was held on the 12 November 2016, with over fifty delegates from across the Region and all industrial sections in attendance. New members for the next Regional Equality Forum were elected for the next two-year period.

Young Members Network – a new Chair and Secretary were elected at their meeting held on the 29 November 2016, and exciting and inspirational plans for the year ahead were discussed and agreed, including "freshers week" events at universities within the Region, Welsh Assembly Young Members Events Day, the £10 per hour campaign, along with focusing on young people's mental health.

Regional Equality Network – since its inception in October the Group has circulated an Equality Survey, implemented an Equality calendar, circulated a Branch Officers Equality Toolkit and compiled a half day equality training session to be rolled out to workplaces during 2017. We have received a good interest in mental health awareness training and should be able to run at least eight courses throughout the year.

Public Services

During the last twelve months the Public Services Section of the Wales and South West Region has continued to adopt a pro-active organising and recruitment strategy in line with the principles of GMB@Work which has seen Public Services Officers, branches and activists prioritising organising activity in defence of the on-going challenges of budget cuts and changes to terms and conditions of employment.

Within Newport City Council a campaign was organised around domiciliary care registration and proposed changes to shift working within Streetscene.

In North Wales we have seen campaigns within both Gwynedd and Anglesey Councils in challenging plans to cut school cleaning budgets in excess of 50%. On the back of this campaign we have seen an increase in membership as well as raising the profile of the GMB across both of these authorities.

The Caerphilly County Borough Council, activists have adopted the initiative of sending out a questionnaire to all members regarding contracted hours and the shortage of staff, which is having a significant impact on the delivery of school meals. This has been followed up by a series of workplace visits by Organisers and Branch Representatives which has resulted in positive membership recruitment. The Branch has also been liaising with the Wales TUC with a view to offering free IT training courses for all employees who work within Caerphilly CBC. The employer is very keen to work with the GMB in relation to this initiative and again it is a good example of GMB raising its profile within the workplace.

Cardiff Council Branch remains a very strong and well-organised Branch and maintains a focused organising and campaigning strategy which recently defended members transferring from the Council run leisure centres to GLL, a private provider.

In the South-West area of the Region we continue to see the on-going academisation programme and the involvement of a significant number of multi-academy trusts. Officers, Activists and Branches have responded positively to this challenge, ensuring that the GMB is involved in various consultation exercises and is a signatory to any subsequent recognition agreements.

Branch plans continue to remain the primary focus of Branch organising activity, and a system of monitoring has been set up involving the Branch, Regional Organiser and Membership Development Officer to monitor and provide the necessary support in assisting Branches in delivering their key objectives.

The Region also continues to focus activity around the direct debit conversion campaign which is on-going and integrated into all Public Sector organising activity across the Region.

The Region continues to prioritise activities within both the NHS and the Care Sector within Wales and the South-West area of the Region and recently held a Regional Conference to review the Region's organising and recruitment strategy across these Sectors. It was felt that the Region's success to date has been as a result of issue led recruitment, which was also the main theme of the Conference given the Sustainability Transformation Plan which is impacting of the South-West area of the Region. The Plymouth Health Branch has been at the forefront of this campaign and has utilised this in organising recent consolidation activity, all of which has contributed to an increase in membership. Further consolidation campaigns have also taken place within Somerset and Cornwall NHS workplaces. Consolidation campaigns across Wales continue to take place, and there has been recent success within Betwys-y-Coed and Llandudno hospitals. On-going consolidation continues to take place across the Ambulance Services within both Wales and the South-West area of the Region, where we have seen a stable recruitment performance.



Ray Stewart, Plymouth Health Branch Secretary and Katherine Darcy, Organiser, at the Information Staff, Derriford Hospital, Plymouth

The Region has recently undertaken a review of the Care Sector organising strategy, which has highlighted an organising opportunity as a result of the introduction of registration for domiciliary care assistants within Wales. The Region has

also had a positive response to an organising initiative involving foster carers both within Wales and the South-West area of the Region. The region has seen a positive membership growth, most notably within Torbay where we have seen a large number of workers join the GMB as part of our campaign to oppose the imposition of a new contract. There is currently a national review under way as to the services we can offer this group of workers, but clearly there remains a significant recruitment potential.

The Police Authorities both within South Wales and Devon and Cornwall have provided organising opportunities which are an integral part of their respective branch organising plans. Both Branches have organised campaigns around key issues of pay, changes to terms and conditions, etc, and are looking to extend GMB recognition into areas where we are not currently recognised, taking the opportunity to consolidate membership.

In summary, although there are challenging times across Public Services, GMB Wales and South-West Region continues to adopt a proactive strategy both in terms of campaigning on behalf of existing members and organising planned recruitment and consolidation activity.

YORKSHIRE & NORTH DERBYSHIRE REGION

Over the last 12 months we have seen a significant level of reorganisation in the region with the appointment of two new Senior Organisers, five new Organisers, a new Legal Officer and a new ULF Project Team. It is testimony to the strength of the region that it has not impeded our direction of travel, and that we have maintained our robust campaigning activities on the industrial, social and political front.

Our membership has remained relatively stable despite the continued austerity, which our members have been facing and continued decline in Public Services. We have lost 35,000 jobs in the region in Public Services since 2010.



Our key focus has been the involvement of and engagement with our activists and workplace organisers, ensuring that they are at the forefront of our recruitment and retention activities, thus cementing GMB@Work in everything that we do as a region. One example of this in October 2016 was our first Campaigning Regional Council where we invited activists to attend Regional Council, which dealt with the region's business in the morning and then heard from a number of speakers in the afternoon and this led to an additional 30 activists attending Regional Council.



Our Regional Executive Committee holds every other monthly meeting in GMB organised workplaces around the region ensuring that members and reps meet the Committee and the Committee members meet them to promote the work that lay members do in running the union.

We have introduced a monthly newssheet 'The Activist', which is emailed and posted out to every rep and contact across region and which contains news and updates on campaigns and events which we and our activists are involved in and which celebrates achievements, successes and good practices. This has proved very popular.



We also opened our first Activists' Centre in the West of the region in Cleckheaton. This new Centre opened in

partnership with the local GMB Organising Branch, our regional ULF Project and the Labour Party has already become the hub of activity for the Movement and the Community in the area. We hope to open more Activists' Centres on the same model around the region.

Our Branch Weekend was once again a very well attended successful event with over 180 activists attending to take part in debates and to hear a variety of speakers, including the General Secretary and the Labour Shadow Chancellor and to debate issues such as:

1. How do we make Parliament and those in it work for us?
2. Rebuilding communities after Brexit - do unions have a role to play?
3. Modern day slavery – what can we do to fight it?
4. Leaving Europe – how do we ensure workers don't pay the price of Brexit?

To build on the impetus of the Activists' Branch Weekend, which is always oversubscribed, we held

3 Branch Saturdays in Brighouse, Sheffield and Wakefield offices. This brought together activists on a geographical basis to encourage branch involvement, joint working and campaigning.



This year we also re-launched our Equalities and Inclusion activities holding our first Equality Summit, which re-established our Equality Forum, this has led to the Forum members



rebooting our campaigning activities producing a full schedule of events for the year and taking the lead on a number of community events across the region, including Wakefield Pride, Leeds Pride, York Pride, the Durham Miners' Gala and London Pride and many other marches and demonstrations.

The Equality Forum also organised our second Women's Conference which attracted over 50 delegates, and which heard from a number of guest speakers, Jane Senior the Whistle blower in the Rotherham child abuse enquiry, representatives from WASPI, Tracy Brabin MP for Batley and Spenningsdale and Paula Sherriff MP for Dewsbury.



Our young members continue to take the lead on many campaigns such as the Mental Health Awareness Campaign. Our Regional Young Members' Committee has been very involved in a variety of activities and this has led to Yorkshire regional reps securing positions on the TUC Young Members' Forum and the GMB's Central Executive Council.

We have continued to pursue a robust organising agenda, our organising weeks continue with each area officer team standing down to work with the

Regional Organising Team for 4 weeks per year to maximise recruitment and retention. This year we have incorporated Workplace Organisers into the organising schedule and also introduced 'Organising August', which saw recruitment activity in each team area over the 4 weeks during the month, which is traditionally a quiet one for recruitment.

The region held its first Manufacturing Conference in order to bring key reps together sharing best practice. We are determined to build key campaigns and establish the section as a key priority for the region.



Our campaign continues at ASOS notwithstanding the move to recognise Community, which we continue to challenge through the TUC dispute procedure. Our activity has never wavered and our membership continues to grow.



Industrially we have championed our members' rights, their aspirations, protecting their jobs and terms and conditions. We have had 8 official industrial action disputes sanctioned by the Regional Executive Committee since last we met:

- 92% vote for industrial action at Veolia against the aggressive management and bullying
- 100% for strike action by our members at Vinci schools' contractors in pursuit of the Living Wage
- 100% strike action by our members at Taylor Shaw in pursuit of the Living Wage
- 77% for strike action by our members at Amey against redundancies, bringing the number down

from 69 to be made redundant to 1, all of those being redeployed

- 98% at Tangerine Confectionery in York for a decent pay rise and improved terms and conditions.
- Our members at Phillip Green's Spectrum for Arcadia plant in Leeds secured an improved pay offer after two days of strike action.



We have stood shoulder to shoulder with our members facing closure at Tata Steel, our members in the NHS coping with cuts, our Local Government membership reeling under more austerity.

We have established GMB as the union for Foster Carers, a hidden social service provided by workers who are exploited like any other workers. We are leading from the front in Foster Care and taking the arguments for our members regardless of their employment status, into the Town Halls and beyond. We submitted evidence to the Education Select Committee, which resulted in the GMB being called in front of the Committee to give verbal evidence; our profile has been raised to such a point that we are seen as the union for Foster Carers.



We have organised Taxi Drivers in Sheffield, Leeds and most recently in York, all struggling with the economic impact on them of Uber.

The tragic killing of Jo Cox MP led to a by-election in her seat of Batley and Spen. Jo had been an MP for a little over a year, but in that time had made a huge impact on both her own constituents as well as the national and international political world. This was truly a by-election that no decent person would have wanted and as such the other major parties all took the

extraordinary decision not to field candidates against Labour out of respect for Jo. However, while most saw the need for this by-election as a tragedy sadly, some far right and fringe activists saw it as an opportunity with 9 other candidates standing against Labour.

GMB activist, screenwriter and actor Tracy Brabin was selected by local party members to stand for Labour in the by-election, which took place on 20th October 2016.

Given the unique circumstances of the by-election, Labour's campaign was focused on raising awareness of the poll and ensuring our campaign denied the far right and fringe candidates the ability to form an effective opposition to our candidate.



The second GMB Annual Political School took place at Wortley Hall in November with GMB members from this region and Birmingham region taking part. The 2-day event topics up for debate included the economic consequences following the Brexit vote, led by Greek Economist Oliver Vardakoulias from the New Economic Foundation. Simon Jose from the Public Policy Research Unit led a discussion on Devolution and the dangers for trade unions.

Our regional direction is clear and built on the commitment and hard work of our Staff, Officers and Reps. I thank them all.

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