

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT



ANNUAL CONGRESS 2016

Bournemouth International Centre

CONGRESS - SUNDAY 5 JUNE - MONDAY 6 JUNE

9.30 am - 12.30 pm, 2.00 pm - 5.30 pm

SECTION CONFERENCES- TUESDAY 7 JUNE

9.30 am - 12.30 pm, 2.00 pm - 5.30 pm

CONGRESS - WEDNESDAY 8 JUNE

9.30 am - 12.30 pm, 2.00 pm - 5.30 pm

CONGRESS - THURSDAY 9 JUNE

9.30 am - Close of business

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GENERAL SECRETARY'S INTRODUCTION



BUILDING A 21ST CENTURY UNION

Dear Colleague

I couldn't be more proud to welcome you to Bournemouth for the GMB's 99th Congress and my first as your General Secretary.

It's been quite a year for our great Union, another 12 months that has seen membership growth and increased financial stability which again has bucked the trend of the other big Unions.

In November we had the elections for CEC members and congratulations again to every successful candidate who took their seat to represent our members over the next 4 years. Commiserations too to those who weren't successful this time, your time may come again.

The other election was of course that of GMB General Secretary and it was the proudest moment of my working life when you, our members, elected me.

I want to pay tribute to Paul McCarthy not only as a formidable opponent but for the sheer professionalism, comradely and friendly style and manner which he displayed throughout, that made the historic hustings and contest one that GMB should be very proud.

I also want to thank from the bottom of my heart all those who supported me, saw the vision I set out, and bought into it. That vision, with all your help and assistance, will begin to take shape starting at this very Congress.

The biggest immediate challenge facing us is the EU Referendum in just a couple of weeks' time and in which we are encouraging our members to vote remain.

But that is an angry remain, based around the potential huge job losses if we come out of the EU and the stubborn facts that, in terms of laws and rights for working people, almost all of those in the last 20 years, have come from Europe including the right to 4 weeks paid holiday, parental leave, health and safety and many others.

But we recognise that Europe is a million miles from perfect with immigration and the free movement of labour allowing unscrupulous employers to undercut workers hard fought and hard earned terms and conditions.

Immigration and free movement aren't the cause, its EMPLOYERS pursuing this race to the bottom that are 100% to blame as they abuse ALL workers whether you are from Poland or Sunderland, Stepney or Hungary.

Other challenges are this Tory Government, still absolutely intent on attacking Unions and the very voice of working people despite the serious bloody nose we gave them over the Trade Union Act. Don't be fooled into thinking they've gone away, they will be licking their wounds and will come again. We will be ready.

The Labour Party needs to shape up and fast before the internal petty battles tear it apart for good. They must LISTEN to the clear message of the electorate back in May where in Scotland they were hardly even a contender, in Wales where we did better than expected, and across England where frankly with one or two exceptions, the result was hugely disappointing.

The Labour Party must become again the voice of the workers in Parliament to make laws that help working people and our families and communities. Working people have never needed it more.

Internally the GMB needs to look at our election process because, whilst I was so proud to be elected General Secretary, a turnout of 5% is utterly unacceptable and together we will introduce a new process that is utterly open, transparent and inclusive and where all our members participate.

This Congress will look at how we train our new reps, will consider the crisis in the care sector and will look at clear strategies for manufacturing, for energy and for local government and the NHS.

Congress will also consider the vital role of women in the GMB, and young people, and the many equality strands, and also debate what we currently do on the European and International stage, and how we can make our activity even wider.

And we will also look at how we communicate with our members and what, in 2016 and beyond, our members want from us that will mean they get more involved.

But it won't be me or, brilliant though they are, the Senior Management Team coming up with the answers.

The answers will come from YOU. YOU our delegates to Congress who know and understand the very challenges and threats our members in your workplaces and branches face every day.

We need to give you the forums, the opportunity to raise those challenges with us, to tell us what help, assistance, support and resources you need to do the brilliant job you do to build our Union.

My General Secretary campaign message was that, if elected, I will be the activists General Secretary.

I recognise that this great Union can and will ONLY be built in workplaces, in local branches, in Regions, by reps who are given the very best training to do what you do so well, supported by the fantastic officers and staff that we are lucky to have.

And this Congress will be a bit different. We have two sessions arranged where you, our activists will be on the stage telling us all of the fantastic successes you have achieved on behalf of our members. This will certainly be a recurring theme in future years.

We also have a session on Wednesday afternoon where YOU will be asked what you think Congress should look like, what changes we can make to make it more participative, more relevant and yes, more fun!

So this week in Bournemouth is going to be historic in the GMB history. It will be seen as the year when YOU, our activists, started the process of together BUILDING a 21ST CENTURY UNION.

Have a great week and please have your say

Tim.



TIM ROACHE
General Secretary

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THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S TASKFORCE PROGRESS REPORT

This report provides information on actions and progress following Congress adoption of Taskforce recommendations and covers additional work the Taskforce have undertaken.

Actions and Progress

Listed below in a condensed form are recommendations followed by a brief description of action taken and progress made to date.

Taskforce Recommendations adopted at Congress 2015

Recommendations	Progress to date / Action taken;
<p>GMB Appointment Process</p> <p>That a new GMB employee appointment process is put in place which ensures best practice in the interview process and method, the panel makeup and conduct and that this be applied consistently across the union for all appointments. That the appointment system is fair, transparent, and accountable, compliant with equality legislation and one in which faith, trust and confidence can be placed</p>	<p>The new GMB appointment procedures and accompanying guidelines were put in place shortly after Congress 2015 and have been used throughout the union to fill subsequent vacant posts. The agreed rule changes have been made to the GMB rule book to accommodate the new appointment process.</p>
<p>Regional variations</p> <p>A standardised regional equality audit covering regional practices and gender statistics be regularly undertaken. Completed audits be circulated and the results compared and evaluation by the SMT and the National Women's Taskforce. Finally, established best practices are implemented throughout GMB.</p>	<p>The Taskforce have produced a draft equality audit form and proposed method of undertaking the audits. These have been submitted to GMB's Senior Management Team for consideration and potential implementation.</p>
<p>Communicating our Commitment;</p> <p>The GMB Rule Book should communicated its commitment to the previously adopted Taskforce aims and objectives</p>	<p>The GMB rule book now contains the statement within "Our Purpose": <i>"We will strive to ensure that GMB's profile reflects all equality strands in the union at all levels of the lay and employee National, Regional, Branch and Workplace structures."</i></p>

Taskforce Recommendations adopted at Congress 2014

<p>Zero Tolerance</p> <p>The GMB Zero Tolerance policy be given the widest possible circulation</p>	<p>Work continues to promote awareness of the GMB Zero Tolerance policy; it is featured within GMB@Work Training. It is regularly included in National Conference materials and can be found in the 2016 Final Agenda Congress Guide.</p> <p>GMB's Senior Management Team agreed measures to ensure this document is distributed and displayed within GMB offices.</p>
<p>Data related recommendations.</p> <p>A robust and consistent approach should be adopted by Regions to ensure that the data is always accurate and up to date.</p>	<p>The level of information about courses held and details of participants has been revised and improved in advance of the joint evaluation and potential amendment of this system by the Taskforce and National Education Officer</p>

<p>GMB Workplace Contacts recommendations; The role of GMB Workplace Contact be properly recognised and valued, where possible becoming a stepping stone to the role of Shop Steward / Workplace Organiser.</p>	<p>The Taskforce conducted a survey of GMB Workplace Contacts, carried out a detailed analysis of responses received and based on this, produced a detailed report. The report, which has been submitted to the GMB Senior Management Team for consideration, contains recommendations covering; guidelines defining the role and associated duties as well as the provision of a standardised support package for all GMB Workplace Contacts.</p>
<p>Encouraging women to become Reps Materials should be created to explain what GMB representatives do and encouraging women to become GMB representatives.</p>	<p>The Taskforce produces information materials to explain GMB structures, positions carried out by Lay Reps and duties of many GMB employees. A number of videos entitled “Women’s Voices” have been produced in which women talk about their experiences being active in GMB. The aim of this work is to educate and inform women who may be tomorrow’s leaders, whilst also ensuring that GMB celebrate and share the great work undertaken by today’s Lay Reps and Employees.</p>
<p>Annual Women’s Conference; An Annual Women’s issues based Conference be held by each region. The funds required to organise these Conferences should be budgeted for, and sponsorship gained were appropriate. The success of these events should be subject to a review and discussions with the Task Force before moving to a National Conference.</p>	<p>The North West and Irish Region continue to hold their Annual Women’s Conference celebrating their 15th last year. The Birmingham and West Midlands, Midlands and East Coast, Yorkshire, London and Southern Regions have each held one or more Women’s Conferences. GMB Scotland, the Northern and Wales & South Western Region are each scheduled to hold their inaugural Women’s Conferences later in 2016.</p> <p>The Taskforce have had various degrees of involvement with each Regional, offering support, and the provision of speakers as well as producing guidelines for organising Women’s Conferences. As a minimum the Taskforce has been represented at each Conference. Whilst no two regions have the same approach to the organisation of these Conferences, the results and outcomes of the events are very similar. Women feel more supported and confident, are better able to make their voices heard and become more actively involved in GMB. Once all Regions have held their Women’s Conference the Taskforce will fully evaluate these events and move on to the next stage which is the National Women’s Conference.</p>
<p>Women at Congress; That each Region ensures the gender balance of their Congress delegation reflect the gender balance of their membership. An explanation of GMB Congress and how it works be promoted, a pairing system be introduced and reception be held for new Congress delegates. Guidance be provided to Branches on handling Congress nominations.</p>	<p>These recommendations have been submitted to the GMB Senior Management Team for consideration and potential implementation. There has been dialogue about a Congress reception. In the meantime different regions have different arrangements in place and there has been a gradual increase in the number of women Congress delegates, this year women make up 35.5% of the Congress delegation.</p>

<p>GMB: The Employer;</p> <p>GMB adopt the following five key principles and objectives;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GMB employee policies and procedures be assessed and audited and improved. 2. All GMB policies and procedures on recruitment, induction, appointment, employment, training, progression and promotion be reviewed and harmonised across the union 3. Variations of policies and procedures be eliminated and brought in line with agreed national standards. 4. Auditing and governance arrangements put in place to ensure all aspects of the union apply policies procedures fairly and consistently 5. GMB develop an equality advisory panel that will oversee monitor and 'equality proof' GMB employee policies procedures and practices. 	<p>The GMB Appointment system has been changed (as above); the remaining recommendations have been submitted to GMB's Senior Management Team for consideration and potential implementation.</p>
<p>Progression to Officer</p> <p>GMB develop a National Staff to Officer Policy.</p>	<p>The National GMB staff to Officer policy remains in place is used when applicable and working well.</p>
<p>GMB Training</p> <p>The Taskforce produced numerous training related recommendations, covering both lay reps and employees. Each of these recommendations having a common aim to ensure that training is delivered consistently throughout GMB, is relevant, is accessible and of the highest standard.</p>	<p>The Taskforce has worked closely with National and Regional Education Officer/s and progress has been made in areas such as development of some online training and equality proofing course material.</p> <p>However the Taskforce have gained a clear understanding of an established major diversity in the provision of regional education services throughout the union. These diversities are manifested in major differences of resources within education departments, the range of training delivered and who delivers training. This lack of a cohesive education service presents a barrier to implementing many Taskforce proposals consequently, the Taskforce welcome the proposed Training review</p>
<p>Flexible employment practice</p> <p>GMB to introduce a pilot scheme of employing part time Officers</p>	<p>These recommendations have been submitted to GMB's Senior Management Team for consideration and potential implementation</p>
<p>Mentoring</p> <p>GMB implement a mentoring system for employees and post holders.</p>	<p>The Taskforce have produced a draft Mentoring policy which is being developed further by the National HR department.</p>

<p>Internal Staff Communications</p> <p>GMB to put in place an internal staff communications bulletin for circulate throughout the union.</p>	<p>Through the National HR Department, GMB continues to produce and circulate the “All Staff Bulletin”.</p>
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Additional work the Taskforce has undertaken.

Following their decision to co-opt three new members the Taskforce now comprises the following;

Ann Lafferty, Mary Turner, Sheila Bearcroft, Kathy Abu-Bakir, Julia Nicola Brady, Jude Brimble, Ida Clemo, Dayan Edwin, Amanda Gearing, Emma Golding, Margaret Gregg, Sue Hackett, Sarah Hurley, Mary Hutchinson, Farzana Jumma, June Minnery, Barbara Plant, Desiree Risebury, Kath Slater, Karen Smith, Cath Speight, Kathleen Walkershaw

Examples of additional work undertaken by the Taskforce following discussions held at Meetings are detailed below;

- The Taskforce are proud that the first Eleanor Marx Award will be presented at this years Congress, they initiated this award and had the difficult task of selecting one winner from the hard working truly inspiring women who were nominated.
- Domestic violence is a growing problem, the Taskforce are looking at the work undertaken by NEF along with work some Regions are carrying out around this issue in terms of campaigning, educating and negotiating workplace policies. The conclusion of this work will be a comprehensive advisory pack produced by the Taskforce and made available throughout the union.
- The Taskforce welcome the growth in regional and industrial women's networks and forums and intend to promote these activities further.
- The Taskforce have continued to work closely with the National Equality Forum, having an input at national meetings and also attending and addressing annual conference. With the support of the National Equality Officer the Taskforce have invited Regional Equality Officers to their next meeting, to promote a joint approach to areas of common interest.
- The Taskforce have been working jointly with National and Regional Education Officer/s to progress their aims and objectives. Together work is being undertaken to develop potential summers schools for GMB women reps. and an online survey has been jointly produced aimed at reps, to establish their experiences with accessing training, branch participation etc. Members will also be encouraged to take part in a survey too.
- The Taskforce sought the views of the NEF and the Branch Review Committee before carrying out their online survey of Branch Equality Officers, once responses have been fully evaluated a comprehensive set of BEO guidelines will be produced and distributed by the Taskforce.
- The Taskforce are currently analysing GMB’s membership statistics, comparing them to previous data in order to establish an analysis of gender breakdown.
- The Taskforce now have their own page in the members area of the GMB National Website and it is used as a vehicle to progress and promote their work.
- The Taskforce continue to look at external organisations outside of GMB to understand and evaluate methods used to increase the level of female participation.

- Regional variations on the coverage of equality related subjects within GMB magazines are of concern to the Taskforce; this issue is being addressed by individual Taskforce members on a regional basis.
- The Taskforce aim to replicate their successful Fringe meeting and Exhibition Stand at Congress 2015 again at this year's Congress.

BRANCH REVIEW WORKING PARTY UPDATE

The Branch Review Working Party meetings held in 2015/2016 were attended by:

CHAIR	MALCOLM SAGE, VICE-PRESIDENT
BIRMINGHAM & WEST MIDLANDS	MARGI CLARKE
LONDON	JOE ISAACS
MIDLAND & EAST COAST	VIC BAINES
NORTHERN	JOY THOMPSON
NORTH WEST & IRISH	KEVIN FLANAGAN
GMB SCOTLAND	JOHN MARR
SOUTHERN	ANDY NEWMAN
SOUTHERN	BARBARA PLANT
WALES & SOUTH WEST	ROGER HUNT
	WENDY WESTON
YORKSHIRE & NORTH DERBYSHIRE	ERIC BATTY
GENERAL SECRETARIES	TIM ROACHE
	PAUL KENNY
REGIONAL SECRETARY	PAUL MALONEY, SOUTHERN
REGIONAL OFFICER	HITEN VAIDYA, LONDON
HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS	ROSE CONROY
MEDIA & CAMPAIGNS CO-ORDINATOR	CHARLOTTE GREGORY
EXECUTIVE OFFICER	STEVE SHORT
EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER	PAULA KEANE
NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION UNIT	ALISON TURTLE
INFORMATION SYSTEMS DIRECTOR	NICHOLAS MCGHEE

Following the adoption by Congress 2015 of the progress CEC Special Report "GMB BRANCHES – A FUTURE THAT WORKS" the Branch Review Working Party met twice in 2015 and 2016 to discuss progress and action on recommendations in the Special Report.

This report outlines progress on issues discussed by the Branch Review Working Party.

Branches under non-lay member control

As reported in the 2015 Special Report the number of branches under non-lay member control was 157. By January 2016 this had been reduced to 124 branches.

The Working Party welcomed this improvement but recognised there was still a long way to go and referred to the amendment to rule 35.4 adopted by Congress 2015 which stated that an organiser should only act as Branch Secretary for 6 months whilst the Regional Secretary and Regional Committee review the situation. The Working Party recommended that this issue becomes a standing item on Regional Committee agendas and that this list of branches should continue to be reviewed by the Senior Management Team and by Regional Committees so consideration could be given whether to close or merge these branches. A report showing how long these branches had been under non-lay member control and any change in membership numbers during

that time would be made available to the Senior Management Team and Regional Committees to assist them in considering the future of these branches.

Non Recruiting Branches

The Working Party received rolling 12 month reports at each meeting listing branches who had not recruited in the preceding 12 month period. Over the course of the meetings the number of branches reduced from 78 to 55. The Working Party noted that a number of these Branches had under 20 members and reference was made to the recommendation in the Congress 2014 Branch Working Party Special Report adopted by Congress 2014 that unless there were special circumstances Branches with less than 20 members should be closed or merged. The Working Party recommended that this issue becomes a standing item on Regional Committee agendas and that this list of branches should continue to be reviewed by the Senior Management Team and by Regional Committees so consideration could be given whether to close or merge these branches.

Branch Secretary Handbook

The Working Party received and commented upon the Branch Secretary Handbook prior it being rolled out to Branch Secretaries. The Branch Working Party welcomed the completion of the Handbook and recommended that each new Branch Secretary be sent a hard copy version upon their election.

Retention Projects

The Working Party received a report on plans to review the method for recording new joiners in order to free up resources for retention projects. Reference was made to the success of the in-house Wales & South West Region retention team.

Information Technology

The Working Party received a report on the GMB membership system, the quality of data held on members, the methods GMB uses to record and collect data on new members, how GMB contacts members, mandatory fields for online joiners, and the key elements of data GMB need for a cleaner and clearer set of information on members. The Working Party discussed the requirements of Branch Secretaries, their access to members records, their ability to edit members records, and commented on the need for more training to be available on the online Branch accounting system. It was noted that the NAU will have a stand at Congress 2016 to provide support and information to Branch Secretaries on using the online branch accounting facility and that the Senior Management Team will look at how to encourage more Branch Secretaries to utilise the online Branch accounting facility as it was incumbent on Regions to launch and arrange training, to find out conversion to the online accounting system and whether fuller training was required for Branch Secretaries and other Branch officers.

The Working Party were advised that new members now receive a welcome pack within 24 hours of joining. It is sent by post and contains their membership card and literature tailored to their Region or industry.

Trade Union Bill – Check-off

The Working Party received reports on proposals in the Trade Union Bill affecting check-off arrangements and the Working Party discussed GMB plans to combat these proposals, through organising, converting members to Direct Debit, signing up new joiners on Direct Debit only, and replicating the recruitment initiative used at the Olympic Stadium.

Motion 247 - Branch and Local Labour Party

Motion 247 referred by Congress 2015 had been overtaken by the Trade Union Bill which meant GMB's ability to direct resources to CLPs as requested in the motion would be curtailed. However, any branch could apply for a grant from their Region via the Branch Development Plan.

Composite 18 - Branch Organising and Equality Fund

Composite 18 carried by Congress 2015 which asked for a levy to be applied on all branches to help campaigning activity and to build links with community organisations, was referred to the Working Party. The Working Party discussed the feasibility of imposing a levy on Branches, and determined that they seek information from the National Equality Forum on what the branch equality kits would contain, how much branch equality kits would cost, and how many kits would be required, before determining how the cost would be met.

Branch Equality Officer Survey

The Working Party were asked to comment on a survey of Branch Equality Officers proposed by the Women's Task Force. The Working Party commented on specific questions in the survey, but wondered what the survey was setting out to achieve, and whether it might be sensible to pilot in one Region first. Working Party comments and feedback were relayed to the Women's Task Force.

The Branch Review Working Party will continue to meet after Congress 2016 and will bring further reports to future Congresses.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

NATIONAL ORGANISING DEPARTMENT

Since Congress 2015 in Dublin our union has grown by 2,000 members as we continue to build membership in schools, retail and other public, private and privatised urban services. One in three new members joining GMB work in either a shop or a school and 45% of new members now join on line

At the same time, since September 2015 - and as part of our response to the threatened Trade Union Bill, - over 30,000 of our members in public services have been converted to paying by direct debit rather than from payroll deductions – helping to secure our future the next time the Tories seek to attack us in this way.

In the last year effective parliamentary opposition coupled with solid union organising and campaigning has produced real results for GMB members with the withdrawal of the threat to Tax Credits, the retreat from the forced academies for our schools and the success in removing some aspects of the Trade Union Bill that threatened our finances and facility time.

Within GMB our new sectoral approach to organising and representing members in contracted out public services has produced several disputes as our members working for ISS, Mitie and Aramark demand an end to zero hours working and poverty pay – not just where they work but across all their employers local contracts and the across the whole sector where they live.

The world of work is changing fast and this has accelerated since the 2008 crash – with many GMB members jobs and terms and conditions facing a threat from further austerity cuts, automation and the spread of precarious working – with the growth of zero hours, tiny hours, agency, self employed jobs. To maintain our growth over the medium to long term GMB will need to step up our organising and campaigning work to defend our existing members through the tactics and strategies set out in GMB@Work. We need to continue to use GMB@Work – reaching out to potential members in workplaces where GMB density is still not yet high enough for us to put up an effective defence to these threats. As we have since 2005 using GMB@Work to build our membership in action and linking our bargaining and organising strategies ever closer together in every workplace, employer and industry

But we will also need to find new ways to break into new workplaces where collective bargaining or even a proper employment contract have never been heard of. Many parts of the union are experimenting with new methods and tactics to do this – including shifting our focus more towards each industrial sector and away from

any particular employer to build our members power, looking at new ways to contact and organise workers away from their workplace and the opportunities that digital media offer us not just to communicate our message but to build collective solidarity.

GMB is working with our members, Branches and Regional Officers to develop practical plans to build a growing, confident and effective union fit for the 21st Century world of work and invites every member to get involved in the conversation.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

GMB Press Releases

In 2014 GMB secured 628 million mentions in all media. That is an average of 12 million a week. As at May 2015 5,963 people follow @GMBPressOffice on twitter, up from 4,716 at Congress 2014. Since Congress 2014 to 12th May there have been 507 press releases covering a wide variety of issues as follows:

Blacklisting

The next High Court hearing was scheduled for 14th May on compensation for 122 GMB members blacklisted by Carillion and other construction firms. The hearing on ET claims for the Carillion Swindon hospital workers starts 2nd November 2015. The Crocodile Tears Tour protested outside 16 firms across the UK to shame managers who organised the blacklisting.

Economy and jobs

GMB commented on the economy and jobs: real value of earnings down 15.1% and GDP per head down 1.5% on 2007, MOD Order Govern, TATA Steel, new apprentices shipyards jobs, new jobs A&P Falmouth, the National Minimum Wage (NMW), job growth linked to low paid and precarious jobs, mansion tax, pensions and abuse of EU free movement of labour on Teesside.

Political

The Labour Party election campaign was supported with many press releases.

Disputes and pay claims

Disputes covered in NHS, Local Government, Brighton City Clean, M&S Swindon depot, ISS Woolwich hospital, Kier North Somerset, Bolton Engineering, Northern Ireland Water, Anglian Water, Haribo Pontefract, EDF Field Services, civilian Police staff, Jacobs Liverpool, Sheffield recycling, Leicestershire polymer plant, Barking & Dagenham refuse pay cut, North West ambulance service, Wiltshire MOD base, Mears housing Brighton, King's Lynn refuse, Cammell Laird, SERCO in Mid Sussex, parking attendants Wandsworth and Greenwich and Nuneaton school support staff.

Job losses and public sector cuts

Job losses covered were Environment Agency Thames lock keepers, KP Consett, Monckton Coke plant closure, McVitie's Glasgow, North Sea Oil, Fife Glass, Leeds care homes, Surrey County Council care homes, Cornwall County Council, South Ayrshire Council, Prospect care homes, Nuneaton Academy, Abbey special school Rotherham, Wandsworth & Richmond Councils merger, Cumbria County Council. South Wales recycling plant, Royal Botanical Gardens in Kew and Sussex, 6,000 jobs going at Birmingham City Council, Sandwell Council Children's Services and Northamptonshire Children's Services. GMB provided press office for Peoples March for NHS. Also covered were various local NHS protests, impact of 40% cut in local council's budgets, ambulance response times and Care Quality Commission reports.

Housing

Details of top 20 private landlords in each council area getting millions in housing benefit have been released via FOI to promote Congress 2014 Housing Special Report.

Energy and Utilities

There have been releases on lack of comprehensive energy policy and the impact on prices, supply and planning for the future needs of the UK, Hinckley Point C, Sellafield, Ofgem, tidal power in Pembrokeshire, Drax biomass, Scottish nuclear power, home insulation, Ofgem, fracking, North Sea oil, Dungeness B extension, flood defences, E.ON, National Grid, and Eggborough power station.

Other

We covered better pay for care workers and paying for social care, pay for NEXT workers where Tory boss disputes the idea of a living wage, asset stripping by private equity at AA, Amazon, US UK transatlantic trade and investment partnership, zero hours contracts, equal pay and other equality matters, poor air quality, tied pubs, health and safety issues, mesothelioma, Campaigns for Justice Conference, UBER taxi service, tax avoidance scheme, and World Cup in Qatar.

All 507 press releases are published in full on GMB website www.gmb.org.uk.

GMB MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

All departmental work is framed by and fits with GMB@WORK: industry & company newsletters, press releases, websites, twitter, emails, SMS messaging, publications or merchandise.

The use of SMS (text) messaging and email to members by GMB Regions and GMB Sections has increased significantly. With almost 1 million text messages sent to members in the first 3 months of 2015 we have been able to negotiate the rate down to 2.2p per message. Development of an in-house system means GMB no longer pays for emails to members and the media.

The 'GMB New Member Welcome Pack' is getting membership card, regional and UNIONLINE news to new members within 24 hours of them being registered on the GMB central membership system.

The GMB App is the quickest and easiest way to keep up with GMB News.

The online joining facility at www.gmb.org.uk continues act as a 10th region enabling 2,000 to join each month. The national website and mobile website for smart phones get 54,000 visitors each month. Members use the national website to update their membership details and access services and information.

GMB regions produced another 3 editions of their magazines. The July 2014 editions carried the GMB Political Fund ballot saving the cost of a separate mailing. Over 231,000 members read their GMB mag on line at www.gmb.org.uk/gmb-magazine saving thousands of pounds in postage and meeting the GMB Green Agenda.

A year on from the launch we have been able to move to use the wording 'free to members' in the updated literature and advertising for UNIONLINE. We also have a pop up stand that is available for all GMB meetings or conferences. We promote UNIONLINE on every piece of material we produce.

EXECUTIVE POLICY SECTION OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE

The Executive Policy Section supports the General Secretary and the Executive in matters relating to the Governance of the Union and areas of national policy. We service a number of internal bodies and provide support for the General Secretary, CEC and National Officials at GMB Congress, CEC meetings and TUC Congress.

The Section leads in the co-ordination of policy work for GMB Congress; prepare the preliminary and final agendas; advise the CEC on policy matters; co-ordinate the compositing of motions and the drafting of CEC

speeches; finalise the programme, produce the President's running order; and "Congress Explained" document and co-ordinate and draft the President's address. During Congress, the Executive Policy Section supports the President, Vice President, and General Secretary to plan and manage the Congress timetable and supervise the recording of decisions. We also work backstage in the Congress Office preparing delegate documentation and assisting the Standing Orders Committee in programming and policy matters.

Staffing

There are two members of staff in the Executive Policy Section, Ida Clemo and Paula Keane. From November 2015, Paula transferred to the National Equality Department to cover maternity leave and Ida has continued to carry out departmental work alone. However, she would like to thank Helen Heath for assisting in the preparation of the Congress 2016 Preliminary Agenda.

Review of GMB Congress 2015, Dublin

There were 408 delegates of which 35.5% were first time delegates. There was a high proportion of first time speakers, out of all lay delegate speakers, 93 were first time speakers and of those 30 (32%) made Moving speeches. 165 Motions were debated at Congress 2015 (-7 on 2014), of which 141 motions were carried, 23 referred and 1 motion was lost. There was a card vote on one motion which was carried and 1 Emergency Motion. On Rule changes, 1 Rule Amendment remained on the Final Agenda and was carried and 5 CEC Rule Amendments were carried. In addition 4 Rule changes were carried as part of the Finance Report, 4 Rule changes carried as part of the Branch Report and 3 rule changes carried as part of the Women's Report. There were 32 existing policy motions listed in the Final Agenda which were not debated.

The scheduling of Congress debates proved a challenge due to the Presidential visit and the last minute programming of Labour Party Leadership Hustings, in addition to three CEC Special Reports, a CEC Statement, and guest speakers. We heard from eleven guest speakers: the President of Ireland, Michael D Higgins, Gerald Nash TD, Sir Brendan Barber, Hayley Tatum, Richard Burgon MP, Joe Maloney, Gilbert Bermudez, Ibrahim Dogus, Dave Smith, Richard Moore, Monica Smith. The Hustings for the Labour Party Leadership with Andy Burnham MP, Yvette Cooper MP, Liz Kendall MP, Mary Creagh MP, and Jeremy Corbyn MP took 2 hours from the Congress schedule. This worked well with the session being chaired by Kevin Maguire and Regions had an opportunity to ask questions of the candidates based on the agreed protocol. On Fringe events, special thanks to Paula Keane for leading in the co-ordination, planning and liaison with the Venue for the 18 fringe events plus a last minute one.

Following Congress, all agreed motions are allocated to a Section, Department or CEC Committee in order to progress them. The "Action on Decisions" report (see below in Section B) was agreed by the CEC Organisation Committee in July 2015 so that work could be commenced as quickly as possible.

In line with Motion 7 agreed by Congress 2015 a progress report on all carried motions from Congress 2015 has been made available to members on a secure Members area of the National website. 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 Clemo directly on policy@gmb.org.uk

Review of TUC Congress 2015, Brighton

The Executive Section ensure that Congress decisions and GMB policy are taken through to TUC Congress and are responsible for supporting the GMB delegation at TUC. The majority of the work carried in July and August 2015 was to prepare for TUC Congress by contacting other unions for the opportunity to speak on their motions and co-ordinating speech writing. The team provided speech drafts for the GMB delegation and liaised with the TUC to ensure that GMB speakers were called. Once again, the Conference was successful for the delegation with GMB speaking in the many of the key debates. From our GMB delegation of 44 (21 Male, 23 Female) we had 15 speaking opportunities; moving 2 motions, seconding 4 motions, and speaking in support on 9 motions.

Special Projects

GMB Congress 2013 set up two working Groups: Ida Clemo is a member of the Women's Taskforce and Paula Keane is a member of the Branch Review Working Party. Both groups continue to meet and have produced Interim Reports to Congress 2014, 2015 and 2016. The Section also assists the General Secretary by undertaking special projects and duties as directed, producing presentations, briefings, statistics, profiles and research intelligence to use in internal or external meetings

Information Systems and Other Resources for Bargaining & Representation

We provide information system packages to National Office and Regions which are used for research, pay and bargaining support, recruitment initiatives and company financial information. We also ensure that all officers are trained in the use of these systems. On Welfare Rights, we arrange for all GMB Regions to have online access to the CPAG Welfare Benefits and Tax Credits Handbook.

LRD Executive & LRD Information Systems

Ida Clemo represents GMB on the LRD Executive and GMB Staff and all GMB Members continue to have free access to all LRD Publications and LRD PayLine systems. Password free access is also available via the Member's area of the GMB website.

Central Arbitration Committee Applications and Voluntary Recognition Agreements

We produce a regular report for the CEC on Voluntary Recognition Agreements and over the year, GMB Sections and Regions have reported 34 new recognition agreements which included an Agreement with BH Live staff who work at the Bournemouth International Centre.

Policy Work

Following Congress 2015, 5 Carried Motions were allocated to the Executive Policy Section to progress. In actioning these Motions, Ida has been working with the BDA, CWU, the Low Pay Commission, TUC and some GMB Branches.

Ida Clemo submitted the national GMB Response to the Low Pay Commission on recommendations for National Minimum Wage rates for 2016 and the Government accepted two of the GMB's recommendations: ensuring that trade unions have greater involvement in reporting minimum wage abuse and showing hourly rate on all payslips. The Government are consulting on how to implement these. Following the announcement of the new national Living Wage, Ida has been gathering evidence for a GMB response to the Government on its implementation. On NMW enforcement, Ida gave policy advice on a London Borough of Newham report which called for the Government to give local authorities the power to enforce the NMW.

The Section regularly respond to policy enquiries from members and staff and are looking at ways of improving policy information. We hold an electronic database of Congress Policy decisions dating back to 2005, however the section is in the process of collating these key Congress Policy positions in a user-friendly format which will be accessible from the GMB website. We see this as a very useful resource for staff and members and we hope to progress this work further by producing a GMB Policy Guide.

A. REPORT OF DECISIONS MADE BY CONGRESS ON RULE AMENDMENTS, MOTIONS, REPORTS AND STATEMENTS

The CEC Action on Decisions table below sets out the lead responsibility for the actions on all motions carried and referred by GMB Congress 2015. Motions are normally referred in the first instance to the appropriate CEC Committee/ Section National Secretary for discussion on action to be taken and as necessary, bring reports and proposals to the CEC and/or other appropriate Committees. It is also available on the GMB National Website www.gmb.org.uk/congress

REPORTS TO CONGRESS				LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
General Secretary's Report			Carried	General Secretary/ Finance Director
Annual Accounts and Auditor's Report			Carried	General Secretary
CEC SPECIAL REPORTS				LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
GMB Branches- A Future that Works Progress Report (containing Rule Amendments to Rules 26,35,37,47)			Carried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RULE CHANGE • Branch Working Party
GMB Women's Project Progress Report (containing Rule Amendments to Rules 17a, 17d,17e)			Carried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RULE CHANGE • Senior Management Team (SMT) • Women's Task Force
Your Health, Your Safety			Carried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Management Team • CEC Organisation Comm. (Health & Env)
OTHER CEC REPORTS TO CONGRESS				LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
CEC Finance Report (containing CECRA6,7,8,9)			Carried	CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee
CEC STATEMENT TO CONGRESS				LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
CEC Statement on Fracking			Carried	Section National Secretary (Comm. Services)
CEC RULE AMENDMENTS				LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
CECRA1	Rule 4	Dissolving the Union	Carried	RULE CHANGE
CECRA2	Rule 29	Audits	Carried	
CECRA3	Rule 35.13	Branches	Carried	
CECRA4	Rule 26	Legal Assistance	Carried	
CECRA5	Rule 26	Legal Assistance	Carried	
CECRA6	Rule 45	Contributions	Carried with the CEC Finance Report	RULE CHANGE
CECRA7	Rule 45	Contributions		
CECRA8	Rule 47a	Retired Life Members		
CECRA9	Rule 53	Funeral Benefit		
EMERGENCY MOTION				LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
EM1	Save the British Steel Pension Scheme	YO	Carried	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing)

CARRIED MOTIONS		Decision	Lead Responsibility
UNION ORGANISATION: Congress			
7	Report on Passed Motions	LO Carried with Qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Organisation Committee (Exec Policy) • Section National Secretary (All) • All National Office Depts

UNION ORGANISATION: General				
13	Workers' Memorial Day	YO	Carried with Qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Organisation Comm (Health & Env) • Senior Management Team
14	Monument to Will Thorne	LO	Carried	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
15	Eleanor Marx Day	SW	Carried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Management Team • CEC Organisation Committee (Comms)
16	International Women's Day	SO	Carried	Finance Director
17	Retired Members' Association	LO	Carried with Qualification	
20	Establish a GMB or TUC Radio Station	LO	Referred	CEC Organisation Committee (Comms)
21	Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom	LO	Referred	CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee
22	Banner Theatre's 40 th Anniversary Appeal for Core Funding	BI	Carried with Qualification	All Regional Secretaries
23	Sponsorship of England Women's Football Team	YO	Referred	CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee
UNION ORGANISATION: Recruitment & Organisation				
C1	GMB Young Workers Organising Strategy (Motions 24, 25)	SW, BI	Carried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Organisation Comm (Nat Org Dept) • Young Members Network
26	TUC Membership	LO	Carried	CEC Organisation Committee (Nat Org Dept)
27	Employment and Trade Union Rights	NW	Carried with Qualification	• CEC Organisation Comm (Nat Org Dept, Legal, Comms)
28	Facility Time	LO	Carried	CEC Organisation Committee (Nat Org Dept)
32	Organising Agency Workers	SO	Carried	
UNION ORGANISATION: Representation & Accountability				
42	National Shop Stewards Network	BI	Carried with Qualification	All Regional Secretaries
UNION ORGANISATION: Finance & Contributions				
C18	Branch Organising and Equality Fund (Motions 47, 383)	LO, NEC	Carried with Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branch Working Party • National Equality Forum • CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee
50	To Stop the 10P – 14P Increase in Petrol Prices	YO	Referred	SNS (Commercial Services)
62	Reduction in Annual Membership of GMB Union by Annual Subscription In Advance	MI	Referred	CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee

CARRIED MOTIONS			Decision	Lead Responsibility
UNION ORGANISATION: Union Benefits & Services				
65	Unionline	SW	Carried with Qualification	Senior Management Team
C2	TCU Money (Motions 67,68)	YO	Referred	CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee
69	GMB Living Wage Contracts	YO	Carried	Senior Management Team
UNION ORGANISATION: Education & Training				
71	Added Support for the GLI Summer School	SW	Carried with Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Nat Org Dept)
73	ULF Projects Funding	NW	Carried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEC Organisation Comm (Nat Org Dept) Senior Management Team
74	National Learning Committee	YO	Referred	
76	HE Learning Fund	MI	Referred	CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee
78	Mental Health Awareness	BI	Carried with Qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEC Organisation Committee (Health & Env) CEC Organisation Committee (Equality) CEC Organisation Committee (Nat Org Dept)
79	Youth Trade Union Education	SW	Carried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEC Organisation Committee (Equality) Young Members Network
80	Bullying in the Workplace	NW	Carried	CEC Organisation Committee (Nat Org Dept)
UNION ORGANISATION: Equality & Inclusion				
81	Branch Equality Officers	MI	Carried	CEC Organisation Committee (Equality)
82	To Campaign for Paid Time Off for Equality Representatives	SO	Carried	
83	Protecting Union Equality Officers' Rights	LO	Carried with Qualification	
87	What's the Right Age for a Young Member in the GMB Union?	MI	Carried with a Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEC Organisation Committee (Equality) Young Members Network
89	Dual Discrimination	SO	Carried	CEC Organisation Committee (Equality)
90	Childcare and Equality	NO	Carried	
C3	Supported Employment for Disabled Workers (Motions 91, 93)	YO, YO	Carried	

UNION ORGANISATION: Equality & Inclusion (contd)				
92	Re-Opening of Workplaces for Disabled People	NW	Carried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Political, European, Int. Committee • CEC Organisation Committee (Equality)
94	Disabled Members	SO	Carried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Management Team • CEC Organisation Committee (Equality)
95	Violence to Disabled People	LO	Carried	CEC Organisation Committee (Equality)
96	For All Regions to Have a GMB Shout! Group	SO	Carried with Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Equality)
97	For GMB to Support the Albert Kennedy Trust	SO	Referred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Finance & General Purposes Comm • CEC Organisation Committee (Equality)
98	Affiliation to School's Out	LO	Referred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Finance & General Purposes Comm • CEC Organisation Committee (Equality)
99	Domestic Abuse in the LGBT Community	LO	Referred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Finance & General Purposes Comm • CEC Organisation Committee (Equality)
100	Domestic Violence Web Page on the GMB Web - Site	BI	Carried	CEC Organisation Committee (Equality)
104	End Compulsory Worship in School	YO	Carried by a Card Vote (177 For and 166 Against)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Organisation Committee (Equality) • Section National Secretary (Public Services)
EMPLOYMENT POLICY: Health, Safety & Environment				
107	Health & Safety Education	LO	Carried	CEC Organisation Committee (Health & Env)
108	Health and Safety in Call Centres	NW	Carried with Qualification	
109	Asbestos – The Hidden Killer Campaign	MI	Carried (CEC position was Oppose)	
112	Tightening of Working Time Regulations	MI	Referred	
113	Stress	MI	Carried with Qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Organisation Comm (Health & Env) • CEC Organisation Committee (Legal)

115	Effect of Drugs on Wildlife	YO	Referred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section National Secretary (Manufacturing) • Section National Secretary (Comm Services) • CEC Organisation Comm (Health & Env)
EMPLOYMENT POLICY: Pensions & Retirement				
116	Retirement Age	MI	Carried with Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Pensions)
119	Defined Contribution Schemes in Energy & Utilities	BI	Carried with Qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Organisation Committee (Pensions) • Section National Secretary (Comm Services)
120	Pension Passports	YO	Carried	CEC Organisation Committee (Pensions)
121	Defined Contribution Pensions and Ill Health Retirement Cover	SO	Carried	
122	Advice for Members with DC Pensions	SW	Referred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Organisation Committee (Pensions) • Senior Management Team
124	Pension Rights for All	NO	Carried	CEC Organisation Committee (Pensions)
EMPLOYMENT POLICY: Rights at Work				
C4	Modern Voting Methods for Industrial Action Ballots (Motions 129, 130)	SW, MI	Carried	CEC Organisation Committee (Legal)
135	The Notion of "Some Other Substantial Reason" (SOSR)	LO	Carried with Qualification	
136	TUPE Regulations	SO	Carried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Organisation Committee (Legal) • CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
137	Employment Law	BI	Carried with Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Legal)
138	Exploitation of the Working Poor by Zero Contract Hours	SO	Carried	Section National Secretary (All)
142	Fair Pay for All	NW	Carried with Qualification	
145	A Fair Living Wage for All	BI	Carried with Qualification	
146	Living Wage	BI	Carried with Qualification	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
147	Balancing the Books	SC	Carried	
150	Regulation 10 – Agency Workers Regulations	SO	Carried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Political, European, Int. Committee • CEC Organisation Committee (Legal)
153	Changes to the Law on Employment Agencies	YO	Carried with Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Legal)

155	Holiday Entitlement of Agency Workers	BI	Carried	
157	Umbrella Companies	BI	Carried	
159	Paternity Pay	LO	Carried	CEC Organisation Committee (Legal)
160	Unlicensed Surveillance	LO	Carried with Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Legal)
INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: Commercial Services				
162	Cash in Transit Attack	LO	Carried	Section National Secretary (Commercial Services)
164	G4S Secure Services Recognition Agreement	SC	Carried with Qualification	
165	SIA License Fee Refund	SO	Carried	
168	Health and Safety	SO	Carried	
169	Marks & Spencer – More Sharks Than Angels	SO	Carried	
INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: Manufacturing				
171	Ship Building	SW	Carried	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing)
172	Women in Manufacturing	SW	Carried	
174	A Fair Wage for Skilled Workers in the Wood Industry	MI	Referred	
175	TATA Sale of Long Products to Klesch	YO	Carried	
INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: Public Services				
184	Public Service Users	NO	Carried with Qualification	Section National Secretary (Public Services)
186	WAG! Invest in Local Authorities	SW	Carried	
187	Oppose the Privatisation of Children's Services	SW	Carried	
198	Nursing Membership	LO	Carried	
201	Despite Physical Attacks NHS Mental Health Trust Still Insist On Having Personal Photos and Details on Notice Boards	MI	Carried with a Statement	
202	Youth in the N.H.S.	SC	Carried	
204	Ambulance Service Staff	NO	Carried	
INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: The Economy				
212	Austerity and the Impact on Women	YO	Carried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Organisation Committee (Equality) • Section National Secretary (Public Services)
INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: Social Justice				
219	Transfer of Wealth	MI	Carried	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
221	British Values in the Workplace	SO	Carried with	Section National Secretary (All)

			Qualification	
INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: Taxation & General				
C6	Tax Avoidance and Cuts to Corporate Welfare (Motions 223, 225)	LO	Carried	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
224	Employers' National Insurance Contributions – Avoidance Scheme	NW	Carried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section National Secretary (All) • CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: Public Ownership and Control				
228	An Alternative to Re-Nationalisation within the Water Industry	SW	Referred	Section National Secretary (Comm. Services)
229	National Governance of Water Industry	MI	Carried	Section National Secretary (Comm. Services)
C7	East Coast Main Line and the Re-Nationalisation of the Railways (Motions 230, 231)	LO, SO	Carried	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
POLITICAL: General				
C8	Political Engagement and Organisation (Motions 233, 234)	SW, NW	Carried	CEC Political, European, International. Committee
235	GMB Members Standing For Public Office	LO	Carried with Qualification	
C9	MP's Pay Rises (Motions 237, 238)	LO, BI	Carried with Qualification	
239	MPs And Councillors' Behaviour	LO	Carried with Qualification	
240	Westminster Paedophile Group	LO	Carried	
C10	UKIP (Motions 241, 242)	YO	Carried	
C11	Regional Government (Motions 243, 245, 246)	SW, YO, NO	Carried	
244	Protect UK From Everendum	SC	Carried with Qualification	
POLITICAL: The Labour Party				
247	Branch and Local Labour Party	MI	Referred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branch Working Party • CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
248	Labour Being Open and Transparent About Their Support of the Unions	LO	Carried	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
249	Minimum Wage Increase	MI	Carried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Political, European, Int. Committee • CEC Organisation Committee (Exec. Policy)
250	Labour Party Policies	NO	Carried	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee

POLITICAL: Labour Party Constitutional Issues				
254	Labour Party Branch Structure	BI	Carried with Qualification	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
POLITICAL: Democracy & Constitutional Reform				
258	Extending the Human Rights Act	LO	Referred	CEC Organisation Committee (Legal)
259	Emancipation Day Bank Holiday	YO	Carried	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
POLITICAL: Immigration and Migration				
261	The Fear of Immigration	SO	Carried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Political, European, Int. Committee • CEC Organisation Comm (Nat Org Dept)
POLITICAL: Racism & Fascism				
C12	The EDL and Islamophobia (Motions 262, 263)	LO/S O	Carried with a Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Political, European, Int. Committee • CEC Organisation Committee (Equality)
C13	The Growth of the Far Right in Europe (Motions 264,265)	LO	Carried with Qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Political, European, Int. Committee • CEC Organisation Committee (Equality)
POLITICAL: The European Union				
C14	The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) (Motions 266, 267)	YO, LO	Carried with Qualification	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
270	Solidarity with Greece	YO	Carried with Qualification	
SOCIAL POLICY: General				
271	The Closure of Banks in Villages and Towns	LO	Carried	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
C15	Support for Public Libraries (Motions 272, 273)	SW, BI	Carried	
Motion			Decision	Lead Responsibility
274	Royal Mail	BI	Carried	
275	Postage for OAP's	LO	Carried with Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Exec. Policy)
278	Fairness in Trading Offers	LO	Carried	CEC Organisation Committee (Exec. Policy)
279	BBC Bias	LO	Carried with Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Comms)
281	Chewing Gum Tax	SO	Carried with Qualification	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
282	Internet Trade of Endangered Species	NW	Carried	

283	Wildlife Slaughter	LO	Carried	
SOCIAL POLICY: Justice				
285	Pardons for Historical Convictions	YO	Carried with Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Legal)
C16	Police Specialist Training in Dealing with Victims of Rape and Sexual Assaults (Motions 290, 291)	BI, SW	Carried	Section National Secretary (Public Services)
293	Slavery in Modern Times	SO	Carried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEC Political, European, Int. Committee CEC Organisation Comm (Nat Org Dept)
294	Assisted Dying	SO	Carried	Section National Secretary (Public Services)
SOCIAL POLICY: NHS, Health & Social Care				
308	Cancer Care	BI	Carried	Section National Secretary (Public Services)
309	Prostate Cancer Screening	LO	Carried	Section National Secretary (All)
315	Arthritis	SO	Carried	CEC Organisation Committee (Health & Env)
316	Antenatal First Aid	BI	Referred	Section National Secretary (Public Services)
317	Children's Health Concerns	LO	Carried	CEC Organisation Committee (Exec. Policy)
320	Volunteers in Social Care	SW	Carried	Section National Secretary (Public Services)
SOCIAL POLICY: Young People				
322	It's Time to Give Young People the Respect they Deserve	YO	Carried	CEC Organisation Committee (Equality)
C17	Mental Health Services for Young People (Motions 323, 324)	LO, NW	Carried	Section National Secretary (Public Services)
325	Employment Journey	SC	Carried with a Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEC Organisation Committee (Equality) Young Members Network
Motion			Decision	Lead Responsibility
326	Obstacles for Young People in Obtaining an Interview	LO	Carried	Section National Secretary (All)
SOCIAL POLICY: Education & Training				
327	Decimation of Education	NW	Carried	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
334	Dealing with the Twin Challenges of Climate Change and Energy Sustainability	YO	Carried	Section National Secretary (Comm. Services)
335	Fossil Fuels	SW	Referred	CEC Finance & General Purposes Comm

SOCIAL POLICY: The Energy Market				
337	Fracking	LO	Referred	Section National Secretary (Comm. Services)
338	Anti-Fracking	MI	Referred	Section National Secretary (Comm. Services)
SOCIAL POLICY: Housing				
343	Single Homeless Crisis	LO	Carried with Qualification	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
347	Housing Estate Regeneration	SO	Carried	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
350	Selling Off of Social Housing	MI	Carried	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
SOCIAL POLICY: Transport				
355	Public Transport Costs	LO	Carried	Section National Secretary (All)
357	Public Transport Deficit in Rural Areas	SW	Carried	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
358	The Scottish Referendum and Bus Passes in Great Britain	SO	Carried with Qualification	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
359	Unfair Charges	LO	Carried	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
360	Motor Insurance Unfair Practice	LO	Referred	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
361	Local Authorities & Illegal Plying for Hire	NW	Carried	Section National Secretary (Comm. Services)
364	Road Transport Infrastructure	NO	Carried with Qualification	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
365	Medical for All HGV Drivers	LO	Carried	Section National Secretary (Comm. Services)
366	'Green' Fuel – Shipping	SO	Carried	CEC Organisation Committee (Health & Env)
367	Second Runway at Gatwick	SO	Carried with Qualification	Section National Secretary (Comm. Services)
368	Indignity of Physically Impaired Passengers Travelling Through Stansted Airport	LO	Carried	Section National Secretary (Comm. Services)
370	Parking on Pavements	LO	Carried without the Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Health & Env)
SOCIAL POLICY: Welfare Rights & Services				
374	DWP to Work in Partnership with Other Agencies	NW	Carried without the Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Exec. Policy)
377	Access to Work	LO	Carried	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee

378	Exploitation – Unemployed Working for Benefit	NW	Carried	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
INTERNATIONAL				
380	International Trade Unions Solidarity Appeal	NO	Carried with Qualification	CEC Political, European, Int. Committee
382	Afghanistan	LO	Carried	
RULE AMENDMENTS				
RA18	Rule 37 Branch Secretary	SO	Carried (CEC Position was Oppose)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RULE CHANGE • Branch Working Party

In accordance with Motion 7 agreed by Congress 2015 a progress report on all carried motions from Congress 2015 is made available to members on a secure Members area of the National website. 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.

B. ACTION ON MOTIONS REFERRED BY GMB CONGRESS 2015

Information on the progress on Referred motions is set out below and this is also available in the Progress Report on the GMB website.

MOTION	ACTION TAKEN / PROGRESS
20. Establish a GMB or TUC Radio Station (LO)	The CEC Organisation Committee October 2015 meeting reported that BECTU and other unions had looked into this initiative but with little success
21. Campaign For Press And Broadcasting Freedom (LO)	Following the discussion of a report provided by the Head of Communications, The CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee agreed in February 2016 that the aims and objects of the organisation were broadly in line with GMB's and agreed to affiliate at the cost of £450.
23. Sponsorship Of England Women's Football Team (YO)	A letter was written to the Football Association who responded with the cost of sponsorship which was outside our normal sponsorship range. GMB will continue to work with Regions to identify opportunities for GMB to get involved with women's sport. Some GMB Regions already sponsor women's football teams such as the Doncaster Rovers Belles and the Sheffield FC Ladies teams.
50. To Stop The 10p – 14p Increase In Petrol Prices (YO)	Congress agreed to investigate this problem further so that suitable pressure can be put on the petrol retailers and so the motion was referred. The Commercial Services Section intends to undertake research into this issue
62. Reduction In Annual Membership Of GMB Union By Annual Subscription In Advance (MI)	The motion was discussed at the February 2016 CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting. It was determined that the facility to pay annually by direct debit already exists – members can chose to pay on any one of three dates in any month. As evidenced by the debate at Congress, there is opposition to the idea of better-off members who can afford annual contributions receiving a discount, and in the current low interest rate environment there is no financial justification for a significant discount.
C2. TCU Money (Motions)	In October 2015, members of the CEC Finance & General Purposes

67,68) (YO)	Committee stated a preference for the name "GMB Credit Union". At their February 2016 meeting they determined that the union was happy for this body to change its name to "GMB Credit Union", on the basis that the CEC is able to appoint two non-executive directors who would provide feedback to the CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee
74. National Learning Committee (YO)	This motion has been referred for further examination as there are cost implications in the proposals of the motion. Six out of our 9 regions have an active ULF funded project which is nationally co-ordinated in Yorkshire Region. A detailed proposal was presented by the National Project Director (Colin Kirkham) and discussed at the SMT Meeting on 14 April 2016 who agreed for a National Learning Committee to be set up.
76. HE Learning Fund (MI)	The CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee noted that the union's resources could not cover quite such an ambitious project. There was a modest fund available for GMB use at Ruskin College, and this will be applied for educational use. However, GMB does not wish to return to a large-scale bureaucratic national system. Help for HE students should be a matter for individual regions.
97. For GMB To Support The Albert Kennedy Trust (SO)	The February 2016 Meeting of the CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee agreed to a one-off donation of £300
98. Affiliation To School's Out (LO)	The February 2016 Meeting of the CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee agreed to affiliate at £200
99. Domestic Abuse In The LGBT Community (LO)	The February 2016 Meeting of the CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee agreed to a one-off donation to Broken Rainbow of £250.
112. Tightening Of Working Time Regulations (MI)	The European Working Time Directive is currently under review by the European Commission, and GMB submitted a consultation response March 2015. We will be writing to the Government departments with responsibility for Working Time policy (DWP/BIS) detailing the specific concerns raised in the motion. However, concrete change is unlikely to occur until the EC Review (which is largely deregulatory) concludes.
115. Effect Of Drugs On Wildlife (YO)	Health, Safety & Environment and Manufacturing Section: The National H&E Department needs to carry out more research, which may need GMB to engage experts in this field. In the first instance the Department will be working with National Officer Stuart Fegan to identify the key trade associations. We have so far identified the Chemical Industries Association, Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (APBI) and International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations (IFPMA). We will also be writing to DEFRA to outline our concerns on the issue, and will seek to meet with Shadow Environment Secretary Kerry McCarthy. Commercial Services Section: The Section is working with Manufacturing Section and Health, Safety & Environment Department on this issue, and will support the lead section if necessary. Initial discussions have taken place
122. Advice For Members With DC Pensions (SW)	The National Pensions Department will endeavour to incorporate ill health provision when negotiating DC pensions

<p>174. A Fair Wage For Skilled Workers In The Wood Industry (MI)</p>	<p>This motion was referred to the Section National Committee on the basis that many of our current employers within the industry do not follow the National Labour Agreement and in fact pay well above what is the base line set by national negotiations with the British Furniture Manufacturers (BFM). Our bargaining in individual companies with local workplace representation is far more rewarding in terms of results for pay and conditions for our members where we have more bargaining power within the workplace.</p>
<p>228. An Alternative To Re-Nationalisation Within The Water Industry (SW)</p>	<p>This motion was referred to GMB Water Forum to fully consider issues raised by the motion. This was discussed at their meeting in October 2015. The response from the GMB Water Forum representatives was that they were clear that GMB policy to renationalise was sound but recognised that public ownership takes many different forms, including amongst the publicly owned Water utilities already e.g. Northern Irish Water, Scottish Water and Welsh Water. The key aim of the motion and GMB policy overall was public ownership and delivery of Water to UK customers without the profiteering associated with the current private ownership structures. The Reps however were critical of the role played by industry regulator OFWAT in monitoring the industry. Any proposed move to public ownership cannot occur without reform of OFWAT and its approach to the industry. According to the National Audit Office report The Economic Regulation of the Water Sector, OFWAT could have better policed the profits Companies were making due to lower borrowing costs and corporation tax payments. It has also presided over an industry that has increased its' debt to levels so much that agencies are lowering Company credit ratings. All the while it has stood by as Water Companies have cut pension schemes, slashed workforce numbers and increased the health and safety risks to members. GMB Water Forum maintains that any progress towards public ownership requires simultaneous reform of OFWAT so that it takes into account the actual workforce who are delivering the improved services with less staff and who are bearing the brunt of 'efficiencies' such as reduced pay and pensions. The GMB Water Forum would also seek a route for worker consultation in the lead up to future recommendations from reform from the regulator in order to ensure the effect upon standards of service and workforce conditions are duly considered in the overall direction of travel.</p>
<p>247. Branch And Local Labour Party (MI)</p>	<p>The matter was raised at the Branch Review Working Party and the General Secretary reported that events have overtaken this motion because of the Trade Union Bill the Government are introducing. The impact of the Bill on Political Funds would mean GMB's ability to direct resources to CLPs, as requested by the motion, would be curtailed. The General Secretary outlined options open to GMB to combat the impact of the Bill and its impact on the GMB Political Fund. In response to a request to re-introduce the Apex rule whereby 10% of the Political Fund is allocated amongst Branches to use locally to form relationships with CLPs the General Secretary advised that because of the diversity of branches across GMB not all support the Labour Party. However, any branch can apply for a grant from the Political Fund from their Region via the Branch Development Plan eg to build up GMB membership within the CLP.</p>

<p>258. Extending The Human Rights Act (LO)</p>	<p>The concern of the motion is that a narrow view of the meaning of public authority in section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 means that many private sector and voluntary sector of public services are considered to fall outside the scope of the Act. Thus there may be no obligation to comply with the rights and freedoms incorporated into domestic law such as the Right to Life under Article 2 of the European Convention. The Act refers to two types of public authorities – “pure” public authorities, which must act compatibly in all that they do, and those authorities which are under the obligation when discharging a “public function”. This has been a difficult area since the Act came into force and has been the subject of consideration on a number of occasions by the House of Commons and House of Lords Joint Committee on Human Rights. The area has also be the subject of judicial interpretation ranging from a broad to a narrow interpretation. Several alternatives have been considered in the past but have been considered to have too many risks of unintended consequences that might weaken protection. The use of some form of contractual term has been suggested. Much of the difficulty has arisen through restrictive judicial interpretation which is difficult to remedy. The Act itself is very much under attack by a hard - line Tory Government intent on restricting its application. We propose that further research on the way forward should be carried out with the TUC and the Labour Party and a further report back made to the CEC as soon as possible having regard to the vulnerability of the rights enshrined in the Convention in the UK.</p>
<p>316. Antenatal First Aid (BI)</p>	<p>The Public Services Section is seeking to undertake research in this matter</p>
<p>335. Fossil Fuels (SW)</p>	<p>The International Officer produced a report for the CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee. At their February 2016 Meeting, the Committee considered the report and referred the matter to the Commercial Services Section to determine a position. The Section has responded however discussions are still underway between the International Officer and the Section</p>
<p>337. Fracking (LO)</p>	<p>This Motion was superseded by the acceptance of the CEC Statement on Fracking. No further action has been taken on this motion from the Commercial Services Section</p>
<p>338. Anti-Fracking (MI)</p>	<p>This Motion was superseded by the acceptance of the CEC Statement on Fracking. No further action has been taken on this motion from the Commercial Services Section</p>
<p>360. Motor Insurance Unfair Practice (LO)</p>	<p>The Commercial Services Section will be working with the Branch on the appropriate course of action</p>

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION DEPARTMENT

Since Congress 15, we have witnessed the election of a Tory Government who have taken the opportunity with relish, to drive the creation of an 'us and them' society, where the 'have's' are now considerably stronger than in 2010 and the vulnerable much weaker. The Tory's have been gung-ho in achieving their desire to shrink the state by squeezing the public sector back to the 1930's. They have deliberately underfunded services for the public while the penetration of the private sector in the delivery of public services has never been so wide spread and deep. This has left people and their communities destitute from the cradle to the grave. The Tory's have unleashed a vicious legislative programme in particular the introduction of the Trade Union Bill, a Budget that attacked the young, the disabled, families, and pensioners, as wells as the referendum on UK membership of the EU.

However despite these attacks GMB's work on Equality through inclusion has progressed steadily.

National Equality Forum (NEF3) - The National Equality Forum met on a minimum of six occasions during the year to oversee the work on Equality through inclusion as well as a number of NEF Working Parties.

Access to Justice The imposition of employment tribunal fees since 29 July 2013 has proved to be a devastating obstacle to access to justice, denying justice to thousands of victims of discrimination. The number of employment tribunal claims in 2015 continues to be significantly lower than before tribunal fees were introduced. The employment tribunal claim statistics show that the number of sex discrimination claims in the three months to June 2015 were 814, down 87% on the same period in 2013.

Strategic Priority 1 - Increase membership.

GMB Young Members Network Following the highly successful GMB Young Members Summit in November 2013, the third national summit was held in the North West Region and a new GMB Young Members Forum was elected. Over 30 young members took part and David Hamblin (Wales & South West Region) and Beccie Ions (Yorkshire Region) were elected to Chair and Secretary. GMB had a strong organised presence at this year's Labour Party National Young members Conference. Prior to the conference a GMB young members Political School was held to raise awareness, engage and develop skills

Sellafield Power Station – Working with disability strand NEF member, Convener and National Secretary to develop a joint strategy for equality and diversity at Sellafield. £10 Living Wage – the GMB Young Members Network initiated and the campaign for £10 an hour living wage campaign that included a lobby of Parliament and a protest outside McDonalds.

Strategic Priority 2 - Bargaining

Members at Carillion / Swindon Hospital –

In 2011, over 100 workers (mainly women of Goan / Indian heritage) joined GMB, making the Union aware of racial abuse, intimidation and harassment, as well as supervisors demanding money, gold and goods to secure employment, gain access to extended leave and overtime. They were employed by Carillion as cleaners, catering workers and ancillary staff at the Great Western Hospital in Swindon. On behalf of these workers, GMB made applications to the Employment Tribunal (ET). Sellafield – Advised local officer on a transgender member transitioning. N Power –Held exploratory meeting on joint working on Equality matters.

Strategic Priority 3 – Campaigning

Trade Union Bill 15 – following the 2nd reading of the TU Bill 15, a TUC rally and lobby of Parliament was organised. There was a strong GMB presence at the rally, including a GMB rally before the main event. The

Regional Secretary for Southern and Barbara Plant (lay member) addressed the main rally. There was also a strong GMB presence on social media. Eleanor Marx Commemoration Event – Held at National office and attended by nearly 100 people and speakers included Shami Chakrabarti and was chaired by lay member Barbara Plant. The Eleanor Marx Award was also launched at the meeting to recognise the contribution of women in the GMB. Other activities included meetings:- LP NEC Equalities Committee, London Region Board (LP), Campaigning for GMB supported Labour candidate for Mayor of London, Kate Green MP – Shadow Minister for Women and Equalities, TUC Equality officers briefing, TUC Progressive Economics Seminar.

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 it's hoped that the selection of a Labour Mayor for London may ensure a greater recognition of autonomous LGBT groups. Affiliations / Support was given to the following organisation:- Abortion Rights Campaign; International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA); Albert Kennedy Trust; School's Out; Broken Rainbow

Strategic Priority 4 - Enhance Profile

TUC Equality Conferences Every year, there is a strong GMB presence at all TUC Equality Conferences and often it has been the case that it is the GMB motion that has been forwarded to the TUC annual Congress. GMB Equality has a growing presence on social media while many press releases include equality or discrimination matters.

Press release and interviews included - Blacklisting; Zero Hour Contracts, Youth employment, housing benefit, GMB 125 Anniversary, GDP, and Employment Tribunals. Tackling exploitation; Next; Migrant Workers; MP's Pay rise; Living Wage and Lidl. Plus others

Since last's National Equality Conference, though resources have been extremely limited, progress on equality through inclusion has been steady. Many Regions have developed in leaps, with a strong group of activists driving the equality through inclusion agenda. A significant number of challenges remain for the coming year. These include:- Managing the impact of the Trade Union Bill; Encouraging activists in the development and consolidation of equality campaigning in Regions; Developing Regional self organised groups leading to national self organised groups; Driving the work on Equality matters in GMB Branches; Driving the work on mental health; Securing further resources to take EtI to the next level.

EUROPEAN OFFICE

It has been a particularly difficult and unsettling year for many people living and working in Europe with the terrorist attacks in France and Brussels, and for many more across the world suffering the same atrocities. The underlying threat of attacks touches many more countries in Europe and beyond. GMB extends its deep sympathies to all victims and their families. Our GMB European office staff would like to thank everyone in GMB who contacted them with concern for their safety in March.

The GMB European team works at EU and International level supporting our members across all regions and sections in their organising and campaigning activities. We work in close co-operation with our EU and international trade union colleagues, and with a large number of MEPs in the European Parliament. Updates on our work are provided in a monthly EU news brief available on the GMB website.

EU Referendum

The date for the EU Referendum has now been set for 23rd June 2016, and will be the most important decision of our generation. David Cameron negotiated a deal on EU reforms in February 2016 which do not reflect the concerns of GMB members. GMB CEC members agreed in February that GMB would campaign on the basis of an "Angry Yes" to remain in the EU, recognizing the risks to our jobs and economy of leaving the EU, whilst emphasizing that our members felt let down by the lack of commitment in recent years to defending and

promoting a Social Europe, which must be restored. GMB is providing information and materials in a range of forms to our members to ensure that they can make an informed decision based on facts.

GMB made a clear decision not to join any *Remain* campaign, to ensure the integrity of our campaign and its messaging in line with our members' concerns. A CEC statement will be prepared for Congress 2016 to support the many motions to be debated on the issue. The EU Referendum is currently dominating not just UK but world news. Within the EU, it is affecting every policy and legislative debate. The closeness of the polls are causing considerable concern to other EU Governments and our EU trade union colleagues, who want British trade unions to remain in the EU campaigning for change together.

European Trade union Solidarity

GMB has been moved by the wide support we have received from our trade union colleagues across Europe in our campaign against the attacks we face in the Trade union Bill. Their solidarity is most welcome, and confirms what our movement is about.

Migration/posting of workers

Immigration has become a central issue within the debate about our future in the EU, and GMB is concerned about the way this issue is being used as a tool of fear by UKIP and other right wing and Eurosceptic forces. Responding to C10 (motions 241 and 242) and motion 261 from Congress 2015, GMB's European office continues to work with MEPs and other EU trade unions to counter anti-migrant rhetoric peddled by these parties/factions, and to call for an end to exploitation of migrant and posted workers by rogue companies intent on undercutting pay and conditions. Our position is - deal with those who exploit, not the exploited. GMB is calling for these issues to be tackled in the revision of the Posting of Workers Directive and the wider EU Labour Mobility package. We are working with MEPs and our EU trade union colleagues to make sure that these proposals finally address undercutting of terms and conditions and substitution of our members' jobs. Social dumping and competition on the basis of low wages has no place in the EU. We also want to see the future EU Pillar of Social Rights confirm that workers' rights take precedence over economic freedoms. GMB has produced information and materials to help inform our members about the facts related to migration into the UK, and about the similar number of UK workers living and working abroad.

Refugee Crisis

GMB shares the growing concerns of our EU trade union and Socialist MEP colleagues regarding the EU's handling of the refugee crisis, and is joining calls for EU decision makers to develop a more effective and humane response to this huge challenge.

Rise of Far Right in EU

GMB and our trade union and political allies across the EU are working together to counter the growing intolerance and hate being peddled by far right parties and groups across the EU against various religious and ethnic groups. Responding to GMB Congress 2015 Composite C13 (motions 264,265), GMB supported an emergency motion on the issues at ETUC Congress in September 2015. There has been a worrying rise in far right activities in relation to the refugee crisis and the terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels. The sight of fascists attacking a peaceful rally in Brussels commemorating the dead and injured of the Brussels attacks was horrifying. The inflammatory statements by people like Marine le Pen and other far right politicians are unacceptable, and are fueling further unrest. We are calling on the EU to do more to address the situation urgently.

Economic Crisis, cuts and austerity

Despite what some commentators and politicians claim, the crisis is far from over and the economies of many EU member states remain very fragile. GMB and our trade union colleagues are actively campaigning against the ruthless cuts to jobs and services, which are further entrenching economic insecurity, and are calling for another approach involving investment in sustainable and decent jobs and growth. As European unions, we are united in our opposition to the attacks on collective bargaining and trade union rights and freedoms across

member states including the UK, Greece, Portugal, Spain and Ireland. It seems no country is immune. As agreed in GMB Congress 2015 motion 270, GMB is supporting the Greece Solidarity campaign, but we are extending our solidarity to trade union colleagues in all countries as they come under challenge, and are grateful for their solidarity with us in the face of the challenges we face in the UK with the Trade Union Bill. Many EU countries fear that the threat of UK leaving the EU could create even greater economic instability and further economic crisis.

Stopping Tax Dodgers

GMB's European officer has been actively involved with MEPs and European trade unions in campaigning to bring tax dodging companies and individuals to book. Following the Luxleaks scandal of 2015, the Panama leaks showed that tax evasion and avoidance is far from under control and goes to the heart of our UK Government, with Prime Minister David Cameron heavily exposed. At a time when our members and other workers across the EU are facing the continuing pain of cuts and austerity, it is a scandal that our Government continues to protect UK dependent tax havens and those who invest in them. In line with Composite 6 (motions 223,225) of Congress 2015, we are working with MEPs in the European Parliament special Tax Committee (TAXE) to develop stronger EU wide measures for tackling tax evasion and calling to account companies such as UBER, McDonalds, Amazon, Google and too many others.

Agency workers and other precarious work contracts

GMB has been actively campaigning to remove loopholes undermining agency workers' rights. Responding to Congress 2015 motion 150, we have been working with MEPs demanding progress from the EU Commission on the TUC complaint. We have also raised concerns with MEPs and EU institutions regarding exploitative contracts such as zero hours, and other forms of precarious work. There is further concern about growth of on-line platforms such as UBER, and their impact on our ability to secure a living wage and protect workers' rights. GMB is actively involved with two reports on this issue in the European Parliament and the European Economic and Social Committee.

EU Trade Agreements

GMB continues to campaign in opposition to the current EU trade deals – 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. Responding to GMB Congress 2015 composite C14 (motions 266, 267), GMB supported Labour MEPs who voted against the European Parliament report on TTIP. In the past year we have seen the power of our campaigns force the EU Commission in to a retreat on its toxic Investor protections (ISDS) which are undemocratic and constitute a corporate power grab. However, they are seeking to replace this with something just as bad, which we will not accept. GMB continues to have major concerns about the functioning of a range of other EU trade deals such as Colombia and Central America where we have seats on the groups overseeing the social and environmental sustainability issues. Currently we are focusing campaigning concerns on the CETA agreement which is close to its final stages of adoption, and will be a Trojan horse for TTIP and other deals to follow. We raised all of these concerns in a formal response to the EU Commission when it was preparing its new EU trade strategy.

Opposing deregulation

GMB remains critical of the EU's "Better Regulation" agenda, which we feel presents a deregulatory threat to a wide range of our employment rights and protections. We are working closely with MEPs and other EU trade union colleagues as part of a wider "watchdog" group to monitor and campaign against EU Commission attempts to undermine rights and standards.

INTERNATIONAL

Those delegates who read the International Report to the last Congress will note that our work streams have not changed a great deal. The onslaught on the working class throughout the world continues apace and, despite UN claims to the contrary, global poverty is on the increase. Using an income threshold of US\$5 per day, almost 33% of people in East Asia and the Pacific live in severe poverty, while in the Middle East and North Africa that rises to around 50%. And in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, some 90% of the population exist on less than that amount. Against this depressing backdrop, an Oxfam report earlier this year concluded that the richest 62 people in the world had assets equivalent to the poorest 50% of the global population: 3.6 billion people.

At the 7th meeting of ESNA, a Latin American network of trade unions, that took place in the Uruguayan capital, Montevideo, to which GMB was invited, delegate after delegate accurately defined and described the failings of capitalism giving rise to these grotesque imbalances, displaying a clarity of thought rarely encountered in similar gatherings over here. They correctly identified the proliferation of free trade agreements such as TTIP currently being negotiated in secret as being fundamental to the neoliberal project of removing all regulatory barriers to transnational corporations' ability to maximise their profits, regardless of the impact on the environment or people's quality of life, let alone on any concept of democracy. Persuading politicians in the EU that these deals are less about trade and more about corporate control is still proving difficult.

Once signed, there is no easy way to back out of trade deals, unlike the agreement that was reached at the COP 21 climate summit in Paris where GMB was represented. There, each country made a pledge to reduce its carbon emissions towards restricting the cumulative temperature increase across the planet to no more than 2 degrees Celsius, but they are not legally binding. Moreover, the general outlook is not promising because the measures that must be put in place to reduce global warming run counter to capitalist concepts of infinite economic growth. Indeed, 7 out of the largest 10 companies in the world are energy firms that show little interest in the generational impacts of burning carbon for heating and fuel. Consequently, it is imperative that GMB, as an energy union, is active in 'Trade Unions for Energy Democracy', a collective seeking to bring the sector under public control to achieve a non-carbon economy incorporating a just transition for those workers affected.

Across global supply chains, dominated by Western corporations, conditions for workers in the global South producing goods and commodities for export are often very poor. Casualisation, poverty wages, and the lack of compliance with both domestic and international labour law are commonplace. In December, GMB contributed to the cost of bringing Noé Ramirez to the UK so he could speak at the annual *Adelante* Latin American conference at TUC. He is the General Secretary of SITRABI, a Guatemalan union representing banana workers in the north of the country. They have fought hard to maintain decent terms and conditions in their industry at some considerable cost. Noé's brother was assassinated by a death squad and at one point the entire union executive was kidnapped by paramilitaries. Today, there are less killings in Izábal where the union is based but the threats continue. Meanwhile, the fruit companies are decamping to the south of Guatemala where the writ of the state barely functions, wage rates are at rock bottom and attempts to organise are met with repression.

Without binding restrictions or sanctions on the more exploitative activities of companies, the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) industry fills the void with a plethora of voluntary standards and certification schemes designed to gull the consumer that the food or clothes they buy are produced ethically. One example is the UK's Fairtrade Foundation, part of Fairtrade International, and its promotion of so-called Fairtrade bananas. Initially, only bananas grown by small producers were given the familiar blue and yellow seal of approval but growing demand from large British retailers prompted Fairtrade to move into plantation agriculture. Many of the bananas come from both small producers and big farms in the Dominican Republic. Fairtrade says that all employers must abide by their 'Hired Labour Standard' (that we helped produce) which stipulates that ILO conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining must be honoured but in the DR, 80% of the workforce are Haitian migrants, without a legal right to either live or work in the neighbouring republic, let alone form or join trade unions. We have repeatedly told Fairtrade that this is intolerable. They are undoubtedly making efforts to

improve what is a difficult situation, owing to the racist attitudes that prevail in some DR government circles, but there is no excuse for not telling the public the truth.

We are also experiencing difficulties with the Ethical Trade Initiative (ETI), tripartite body incorporating employers, NGOs and a dwindling band of trade unions. At a time when trade union rights are under threat, ETI is in receipt of multi-million pound government subsidy. Its corporate members are supposed to abide by a base code that guarantees trade union rights but this is far from being the norm. A particularly bad example is Irish/British multinational Fyffes who mistreat their female workforce on Honduran melon plantations so badly that several of them ended up in hospital before Christmas due to being poisoned by handling noxious chemicals without suitable protective clothing. Attempts to form a branch of the appropriate union were met with threats and violence so, in cooperation with our Honduran comrades, we issued a damning public report that went viral. Nevertheless, Fyffes refuse to negotiate with us and, appallingly, are still allowed to be ETI members.

Over and above the daily struggles with rogue employers, GMB has also taken the fight onto a wider stage. We fully support ITUC and BWI initiatives to campaign and organise for the end to bonded labour in the tiny Gulf state of Qatar that was controversially awarded the 2022 World Cup by the corrupt governing body of world football, FIFA. Using Qatar's own figures, at present fatality rates, 7,000 migrant workers will die and countless thousands more will be maimed on construction sites before a ball is kicked. We were part of a delegation to Doha in November and the only bright spot in an otherwise bleak picture is the beginning of a clandestine union movement that, with our help and encouragement, could blossom into an organisation that could take on the Qatari state, not to mention hypocritical British firms like Carillion who are more than happy to enhance their bottom line by exploiting workers in the desert gulag.

GMB, in conjunction with UNITE, launched the campaign to free Kurdish leader, Abdullah Öcalan, in the House of Commons on April 25th. Congress delegates to Dublin in 2015 will remember a presentation on the Kurdish question and how important it is for Mr Öcalan to regain his freedom, not just for peace in Turkey, but in the wider Middle East. In February, a small GMB/UNITE delegation visited Turkey and Kurdistan and we found ourselves amidst a war zone. In the south east of Turkey, hundreds of Kurdish people had been and were being killed by the military, atrocities largely unreported in Europe because of a Faustian pact whereby European states turn a blind eye in return for Turkish collaboration preventing refugees from reaching the EU. Under the increasingly dictatorial regime of President Erdogan, Turkish jails are full of not just Kurdish "terrorists" but also lawyers, journalists, human rights defenders and trade unionists. While British parliamentarians were making theatrical speeches about the need to inflict more bombs on the beleaguered Syrians, their Turkish NATO ally was supplying ISIS.

It will be apparent that in an increasingly interdependent world, an isolationist stance will not bring results. The Panama Papers gave us a glimpse of the world's shadow economy, a globalised web of deceit where untold billions of dollars are stashed away in secret bank accounts, not just in offshore tax havens but in London and New York too. One can only imagine how much better things could be if those resources were channelled into ending poverty instead of buying yachts for parasitical asset strippers like Philip Green. Capital does not recognise national boundaries and nor should we. An injury to one trade unionist is an injury to all, be it in Gillingham or Guatemala, Doncaster or Doha, and the international agenda is central to our struggle against capitalist exploitation.

For more information on GMB's external relations, contact the International Officer at bert.schouwenburg@gmb.org.uk

HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

National HS&E Officer John McClean retired on 30 September 2015 after 22 years of service in GMB, firstly in London Region, then in National Office for a decade. John leaves an enormous legacy and will be missed by colleagues and the wider lay membership. With John's retirement, Dan Shears became the National HS&E Director. Lynsey Mann joined the Department in March 2016 as the new National HS&E Officer.

2015 Special Report on Health and Safety – Your Health, Your Safety: Congress 2015 saw the passing of the Special Report on Health and Safety, which was the focus of much of the Department's activity for the rest of the year. We have developed plans to enact the report, and have already delivered initiatives such as the new @SaferWithGMB twitter account; the new 'Your Health, Your Safety' branded newsletters; a new mental health guide; and the largest ever survey of GMB members (see www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/GMB_H_S_E_Survey_2016). Activity will continue beyond Congress 2016, with the focus of this year's activities centred on developing structures for national and regional forums to flourish. Motions passed at Congress 2015 continue to be enacted, and form the framework for our policy and negotiating activity.

Policy & Consultation: HSE published their new strategy to 2020 in January. As expected it takes a relatively business-friendly deregulatory approach. We will look for opportunities to promote worker involvement and tripartism. We also commented on the draft report on the 2014-2020 EU strategic framework on health & safety at work. We campaigned strongly for the retention of the Approved Code of Practice (ACoP) in construction, after HSE decided it was no longer necessary. With support from UCATT and Unite, we managed to get HSE to commit to review this decision in 2017 with recognition that the ACoP still had value.

Asbestos: We continue our campaigning activity, having lead calls for the phased removal of all asbestos from public buildings by 2028. We remain heavily involved in the Asbestos in Schools campaign, as well as the Joint Union Asbestos Committee (JUAC). We also presented at the 3-day IOSH conference on GMB campaigning on asbestos issues; and spoke at events for Action Mesothelioma Day. We provided advice and support to the Southern Region on degraded asbestos in a number of buildings owned by Wandsworth Council. We also endorsed a March 2016 report on the condition of asbestos in schools in Brent, London, which has implications for schools across the UK.

Asda: In Asda Logistics Services, we have presented the results of the ergonomics study, and are negotiating an ergonomics framework and policy. In Retail, we were involved in the trial of the prototype Omni Trolley, which will assist with top stocking and other shelf replenishment activities. We assisted with the design of a new lightweight trolley for use in home delivery pick. We also negotiated on the development of technology, policy and practice to allow for top stocking of frozen goods.

Food Manufacturing: We concluded negotiations in conjunction with Unite to form a national health & safety committee, and are developing terms of reference. This is a major success following years of rebuttal from the business. Our thanks go to Brian Golding from Yorkshire and North Derbyshire region for his campaigning efforts over many years.

Security Industry: We have provided support and negotiated on a range of issues, including occupational health provision; removal of seating for guards in the retail sector; vehicle risk assessment, and the creation of consultation structures.

Energy Sector: We have negotiated on a range of technical issues across the industry, including changes to competence schemes, asbestos management, and complex working time issues. We remain involved in protracted negotiations with National Grid on their Drug and Alcohol policy, which is being completely renegotiated from scratch.

Logistics Sector: We continue to support efforts to identify poor health and safety practice in employers such as Amazon, which appear endemic across the sector. We negotiated the drug and alcohol policy in DHL Freight, and hope to open up wider discussions on health and safety more generally.

Waste & Recycling: We hosted a major conference in February on worker engagement in the waste and recycling sector. This followed press work on safety standards and recycling rates across the UK. Unfortunately the industry continues to suffer a disproportionate number of serious injuries and fatalities.

Environment: The department continues to be involved with other unions on TUSDAC looking at possible future developments on the Green Deal, the Green Investment Bank and the Energy Intensive Industries. We have led campaigning to ban the cancer-causing weedkiller glyphosate, both in the UK and at EU level.

LEGAL DEPARTMENT

Trade Union Act 2016

In July 2015 the Tories launched the biggest attack on workers and their trade unions since Thatcher through the Trade Union Bill and associated proposals on agency workers and picketing. The Bill (now an Act) will cause significant damage to fair and effective industrial relations and sets a dangerous precedent for the wider cutting of freedom of association and assembly.

The Department has responded to these proposals as being unnecessary and disproportionate and a violation of human rights. We have worked with the Political Department as the Bill has passed through Parliament to oppose the Bill and where possible to limit its most punitive effects. We have responded to the public consultations and submitted evidence to the relevant Parliamentary Committee. We are briefing Officers on developments. The Bill received Royal Assent on 4 May 2015 and at time of writing we are awaiting details of the dates for the implementation of the Act and associated measures.

Against this back ground the Department has worked to support the protection of employment rights by the Union.

Legal Services

At Congress 2014 GMB and the Communication Workers Union launched the first trade union owned law firm in the country. UNIONLINE is a one stop shop providing a broad range of legal services, free to members, and with some 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 70 staff directly. They work with the nominated Regional Officers to ensure that we do everything we can to support members within the union, before sending work 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 trying to add services and make improvements. They operate a GMB rep focus group to gather feedback, and are working on branch communications to try and ensure more information goes to branches without breaching Data Protection law.

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. Currently UNIONLINE has 600 active cases in employment tribunals across the country.

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.

We have briefed and supported Regions and Officers on these developments including those relating to holiday pay linking up with our legal service provision with UNIONLINE.

Blacklisting

We continue to be the leading trade union in the fight for justice for blacklisted workers. We continue to run a very effective national campaign locating blacklisted workers, making those responsible publicly accountable, and providing a continuous stream of news to regional and national media to ensure their story is told. We have also just settled an important High Court action brought by four separate groups of claimants against the forty-four construction companies who signed up for blacklisting. That settlement has achieved substantial compensation for our members, but at the time of writing it is sub judice to reveal the amount.

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.

Policy

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

Personnel

The Department comprises Maria Ludkin and Barry Smith

PENSIONS DEPARTMENT

The Department has been focused this year around not only defending our member's pensions but on how we can deliver improvement through empowering our members. The focus for this has been around numerous workplace meetings and through launching pensions training for Regions. It is important that our members feel in a position to defend or improve their pensions.

Pensions Policy

General pension's policy has followed the same direction as last year of devaluing pensions as a retirement income and moving it towards a glorified savings pot. In 2014 we had the freedom agenda allowing members to access their pension pot in new ways, this year we have seen introduction of a secondary annuity market and the introduction of Lifetime ISA. The secondary annuity market offers members a chance to sell their annuity but this will provide poor value and more chances for our members to be ripped off. The Lifetime ISA could move us further away from pensions especially if as predicted it becomes an alternative for Auto-Enrolment. The introduction of the Single Tier state pension, this has meant many briefings to members as it was misrepresented when introduced and there is still a lot of doubt over what the difference in outcome is for people. Contracting out has ended as part of this change which has meant many employers have been trying to pass on their National Insurance increase to our members which we have fought where ever possible.

Private Sector Pension

The main focus this year has been around looking at areas for improvement. There has been a strong focus on improving DC arrangements with work specifically done within Logistics. As well as this there has been a lot of work done around trying to defend remaining DB schemes to closure. Notable success was achieved within EDF where GMB representatives took a lead and were able to deliver a change in pension arrangement that had little to no impact on our members with some even seeing an improvement.

Public Sector Pension

There has been a number of attacks this year around exit payments. There is the 95k cap being introduced through the Enterprise Bill, abatement of exit packages and a look to reduce exit payments for all. Major changes are in the pipeline around the LGPS with the pooling of funds, transaction costs and enforced investment. We will carry on arguing that our member's pensions should be invested in their interests not the Governments and that no money should be leaking out of our member's pensions to the fat cats of the city.

The department will keep working with members in the next year to raise awareness of pensions and to fight in defence of and for improvements in workplace pensions so our members can enjoy a dignified retirement.

POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

Following the Labour leadership hustings held at Congress last year we mounted a campaign to get as many GMB members to sign up to participate in the leadership election in July. In the short timescale we had we managed to get 25,000 members that were able to participate in the election. This was necessary to comply with the new rules brought about by the Collins review.

We spent a lot of time working with the new intake of GMB MP's helping them settle in and set up their offices. We also helped them with research until they had chance to employ their own staff. The GMB MP group elected new officers and they are also playing prominent roles in the wider Trade Union group of MP's. A significant number of GMB MP's have been promoted into junior minister positions in Jeremy Corbyn's shadow team.

We have continued to work with the Regional Political Officers to deliver Political Education on both the GMB@WORK course and on weekend schools. We have continued to support our members in their efforts to become candidates through GMB or TULO candidate training.

We had a very successful Labour conference; a number of our delegates were called to speak in various debates.

We have supported Industrial officers in campaigns with arranging meeting with politicians to enlist their support. These campaigns include Profiteering in the Water industry, Private Hire drivers, Disabled members employment, BA members campaigning against outsourcing.

One of the biggest thing on the political agenda since Congress last year though has been the Trade Union bill which is the most pernicious piece of anti TU law ever proposed. The draconian measures in the bill will limit the Unions ability to organise strike action, proposals to attack our funding by stopping check off in the public sector.(This has since been defeated in the Lords and so have been dropped by the government). We mounted a campaign that involved contacting our members asking them to write to their MP's. There was a significant government climb down with the Government have accepting the amendments that were suggested by the Lords.

The other big issue happening is the EU Referendum which will take place within weeks of our Congress, our campaign following the CEC decision has been to remain in the EU, although recognising the EU is far from perfect and needs reform our campaign is trying to persuade our members we can only change things from

within and the EU delivered many protections for workers that we all enjoy that could be at risk if the UK votes to leave.

Following message testing we developed an online campaign that addresses the various concerns of our members which are different for geographical area or age or gender.

ELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF OFFICIALS

1 MAY 2015 – 30 APRIL 2016

ELECTION OF GENERAL SECRETARY & TREASURER

Tim Roache

APPOINTMENT OF NATIONAL OFFICER

Roger Jenkins

APPOINTMENTS OF REGIONAL SECRETARY

GMB Scotland - Gary Smith
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region - Neil Derrick

APPOINTMENTS OF SENIOR ORGANISERS

Birmingham & West Midlands Region - Stuart Richards
GMB Scotland - Tony Dowling
- Drew Duffy
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region - Pete Davies
- Sue Wood

ELECTION OF ORGANISERS

Birmingham & West Midlands Region - Ester Compton
Midland & East Coast Region - Harry Harrison
- Sean Redgate
Southern Region - Asia Allison
- Nick Day
- Nadine Houghton
- Frank Macklin

APPOINTMENTS OF ORGANISERS

GMB Scotland - Robert Deavey
- Helen Meldrum
Southern Region - Mick Butler
- Elizabeth Whitfield
GMB Wales & South West Region - Alyn Thomas
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region - Andrew Aidwinkle
- Ben Kirkham
- Lee Parkinson

TUC CONGRESS AWARDS 2015

Barbara Benham, London Region was nominated for the TUC Women's Gold Badge. Unfortunately the nomination was unsuccessful.

Tony Smith, Southern Region was nominated for the TUC Health & Safety Rep Award. Unfortunately the nomination was unsuccessful.

Vince Piper and Lyn Hancock, Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region were nominated for the TUC Learning Rep Award. Unfortunately the nominations were unsuccessful.

Becki Winson, London Region was nominated for the TUC Award for Youth. Unfortunately the nomination was unsuccessful.

SECTION REPORTS

COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION

Introduction

The Commercial Services Section membership grew by 3.5% (up 6,962 members to 203,648) in the past year. The Union's fastest growing Section now represents 31.9% of GMB's membership, having recruited a total of 33,188 members during the year - 44% of the total of GMB members recruited. 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. During the year Gary Smith, who had been National Secretary for over 10 years, became Regional Secretary for GMB Scotland and the National Committee would like to record its huge thanks to Gary for the outstanding work he did for the section and its members.

ASDA

GMB signed a new recognition agreement with ASDA Retail although the company did not agree collective bargaining. Structures and training for a new generation of GMB stewards have been designed and put in place following good organising across all GMB regions. In 2015 9,420 members were recruited into GMB membership, the highest recorded number. In ASDA Distribution a new three year deal brought pay harmonisation onto national rates. Membership grew by 1,202 for 2015. Density in distribution is 80%; density before the national agreement in 2012 was 44%. ASDA Retail announced at the beginning of 2016 that over 4000 redundancies would be made; the affected members are in Canteens, George Desks, Pharmacies, and Photoshops. So far less than 200 redundancies have occurred due to negotiations with GMB.

Aviation

Aviation Ground Handling services continue to suffer from a race to the bottom with hostile competition threatening jobs year on year. Dnata recently lost contracts to Cobalt, which has caused redundancies along with a TUPE transfer. Dnata pay for 2015 reached a rise of 2.5%. British Airways has imposed their proportion of NI contribution at 3.1% on pension scheme members as a result of changes to the 2nd State Pension. GMB members have in a consultative ballot voted by 85% to take action if the company fails to change its decision. 800 jobs are at risk in BA I.T. as the work to be 'offshored' to TCS threatening to bring workers from outside of the UK on Tier 2 visas. GMB is currently making a complaint to the UK Border and Immigration service on the breach of the Tier 2 regulations as well as to the Home Secretary. The company has also indicated that Heavy maintenance in engineering is also under threat of offshoring, with the potential loss of thousands of jobs. BA reported further substantial profits of £1.375bn. So far BA has yet to make an offer on pay.

British Gas

The British Gas group of companies within Centrica have continued to grow in terms of GMB members and organising strength thanks to the fantastic work done by all the lay reps and activists. However there will be challenging times ahead because Centrica is embarking on a programme to reduce jobs and employment costs as low oil prices and greater domestic competition mean they have to reduce their prices to customers. As a result they have announced 6,000 job losses and cuts to future pension benefits. Strong negotiations by GMB have nevertheless secured improved redundancy terms for members who were facing statutory payments and we have maintained good quality pensions with proposed changes being subject to member consultation and agreement. With such an excellent team of GMB reps we can face the challenges to come with confidence.

EDF

GMB negotiated pension reforms resulting in securing an open DB CARE scheme for new starters – one of only a handful in the private sector – and keeping open the three existing DB Final Salary schemes. GMB Reps conducted workplace ballots which returned a 95% turnout and a 75% Yes vote. GMB has secured a full-time National Convenor role in EDF Customer, enhanced release facilities for our new EDF NJC Convenor, and the

National Reps GMB NJC Structure to represent all members across all EDF business units. GMB EDF Customer Reps zero-tolerance campaign targeting abusive calls and excessive workloads has resulted in the Company adopting for the first time a policy on reporting abusive Customer calls. EDF Nuclear Generation members secured a 2% increase for 2015.

GeoAmey

Membership growth continues to be strong and is delivered entirely through the reps network and induction taking sessions. Members' communication has been improved with a GMB monthly bulletin and a regular GMB "safety matters" briefing. A further round of government cuts is being felt through the courts closure programme and negotiations are underway to ensure minimum impact on job losses. At the time of writing pay talks are about to open and negotiations are also due on the restructuring for senior custody officers, to align the role within the management structure, which will also result in new GMB collective bargaining arrangements.

G4S

In Cash Solutions, we have seen circa 400 managerial and support staff job losses, during later part of 2015. The engineering division is in the process of being divested to IBM, with some 390 employees scheduled to TUPE transfer in June 2016. At the time of writing members have voted to reject a 1% pay offer, negotiations continue. In Secure Solutions, negotiations are on-going to secure a new national recognition agreement. Access and bargaining arrangements have been concluded for the new 10 year Thames Tideway Tunnel. Living wage campaigns have taken place around banking contracts and pay talks continue on RBS. National dispute negotiations continue on Northern Ireland Courts contracts on pay and call out arrangements. HMP Ryehill national level dispute negotiations resulted in a 1.75% increase and improvements to the sickness scheme for 2015. HMP Altcourse, national level dispute talks also delivered 1.75%, talks continue with third party facilitation to address the breakdown of the "partnership agreement" in Government Services, negotiations are in the early stages to secure national recognition agreements in Secure Health Care and Patient Passenger Transport services. GMB re-established a national presence within the G4S meter readers during 2015. Talks over pay and bonuses have been difficult and are on-going, and are complicated by the announcement by G4S that they intend to sell their utilities business within the next 12-24 months.

Gentings Casinos

A 2% pay rise was secured for members working for Genting Casinos for 1 January 2016. Closer working between company and union has been discussed with Genting to assist with improving working conditions for the members, and this will continue to be built on through 2016.

Loomis

The 2015 pay and holiday pay arrangements were settled in December, at 2% and average earnings being applied to all 33 annual leave days. At the time of writing a new national recognition agreement, new collective bargaining arrangements and access agreements were in the process of being concluded. 2016 pay negotiations are currently deferred to the 2nd quarter, in an effort to try and avoid a complete pay freeze.

National Grid

With an excellent national and local structure of convenors and stewards GMBs gas distribution members in NGT have secured some of the best pay and conditions around. With the parent group announcing its intention to sell its gas business the priority has been to nail down those conditions and ensure they will not be undermined if the sell off does occur. Therefore the national stewards have reached agreement with the company on a new handbook of terms and conditions and have formal commitment that any sale process will protect these and protect pensions with no loss and keep all GMB trade union recognition and facilities.

Nuclear Decommissioning Agency

The NDA constituent operations including Sellafield and Magnox stations are classified as publicly funded and so have been caught by government interference on exit payments including redundancy and pension terms.

For operations that are to a large extent reliant on long term redundancy policies agreed with TUs and the workforce in return for orderly nuclear decommissioning, this has been a very serious issue indeed. GMB has led the arguments to government officials and ministers that the NDA should be a special exception and at the time of writing this report there are positive signs that government has listened

Securitas

GMB continues to strengthen its position in Securitas, as bargaining structures develop and more contract level pay talks come on stream. Early talks have opened to explore how we could work towards national pay negotiations by 2020. This represents a significant opportunity to GMB ability to organise and would be the first national pay arrangements across the guarding sector. National level disputes resulted in the following agreements: BAE Systems a two year deal which delivers a 14.7% increase for fire crews. 12.9% for Security Officers. SCS contract dispute delivered a 2% increase.

Thompsons

The situation in Thompsons solicitors remains very difficult with the reshaping programme now moving into phase two, which means further restructuring and job losses across the business. The restructuring programme will conclude at the end of September. This year's pay talks are due to resume in October 2016 once the firm has stabilised.

Water

Thames Water members secured a wage rise up to 3.2% (average 2.3%) for 2015, and are planning workplace meetings to consult members on the 2016 claim. GMB Water Forum Reps have met twice with Labour's Alex Cunningham to raise issues of concern about increasing attacks on their terms and conditions of employment and continued outsourcing. This follows on from a very positive meeting with the previous Shadow, Maria Eagle. GMB has written to Ofwat seeking to widen the voice of GMB members within the industry as stakeholders. There has been industrial action at Northumbrian Water and United Utilities in defence of their current pension arrangements.

Wilkinson

In line with GMB@Work policy the number of workplace ballots being undertaken has increased to 120/370 stores, reflecting a strong growth in Regional activity.

GMB negotiated a holiday pay agreement that will apply to all leave and has at least three methods of calculation to ensure members receive the best payment arrangements.

The introduction of the National Living Wage was negotiated and was supported by over 75% of members on a nearly 50% turnout.

Distribution & Logistics

Organising activity in both Bidvest Logistics and Foodservice has increased through GMB@Work training. GMB negotiated new agreements and a pay rise of 2% on base pay and 2% on allowances for workers transferred back into Bidvest Foodservice, and out to ballot at time of writing. Bidvest Logistics in 2015 offered 2% and 2% on allowances, with advantageous changes to agreements. Bidvest Foodservice in 2015 settled at 2% and 2% on allowances. Also it was agreed that the minimum rate for colleagues is the LWF calculation of the LW, which uplifted 450 people's earnings. Agreements were also made on Holiday Pay, and Annual Leave. Membership growth in 2016 has risen sharply as a result of the Organising Timelines on Bargaining put in place, and we have also recruited new stewards at a number of sites. DHL Freight pay for 2016 for a heavy loss making business was 2%. In the wider context of DHL a national combine of stewards was created in early 2016, and is looking at introducing a Charter for Industrial objectives across DHL. The National Pensions Forum continues to meet and develop and we have encouraged the company to look at a number of issues to improve the pension scheme.

Swissport

2015/2016 has seen the further strengthening of our national and local reps structures with the result that GMB are able to proactively campaign for positive improvements to terms and conditions. Negotiations on the 1 October 2015 pay award are still on-going, with a previous company offer being overwhelmingly rejected. National talks are still on-going on an agreement around holiday pay and also the allocation of annual leave.

Yodel

Our focus in Yodel over the last twelve months has been to increase the number of stewards and to develop the skills of our reps group. GMB have run targeted training with the national training officer and encouraging stewards to get fully involved with decision making within GMB structures at Yodel. A 1.2% pay rise for July 2015 was secured with a 4 to 1 majority in a workplace ballot across the sites. GMB also successfully protected Sickness Benefit Scheme with the support of national and local stewards. Nearly 800 Yodel workers responded to a full survey on their views on what should be in the pay claim for 2016. We hope to be able to report in 2017 a successful pay campaign has secured increases in pay rates for GMB members within Yodel.

Professional Drivers

It has been another complex year for our members engaged in the taxi and private hire trades. GMB have been at the forefront of protecting drivers and have been running a legal case against Uber seeking to secure workers' rights for those driving for the multinational firm. In addition GMB activists are working towards a charter for private hire to be able to effectively run political campaigns to support our members.

FINE MANUFACTURING SECTION

Following the merger of Unity the Ceramic union this became part of the Fine Manufacturing section. The GMB Unity Stoke branch S75 was formed with the majority of the local Stoke on Trent Pottery Company's membership being a part of it, the branch is nearly 3000 strong and continues to grow.

The GMB Brussels office has continued to assist British Ceramic Confederation (BCC) on both the Back Stamping (Country of Origin) issue and the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) and has facilitated meetings in the European Parliament. This is a complex issue around carbon leakage but to put it in to context it has the potential to put added costs of 2 million pounds on Johnsons Tiles whose profit this year was 1.5 million. It will also affect the Brick industry which could lead to companies relocating outside the EU to get round the legislation.

Fairey Ceramics

Since the merger, pay talks have taken place along with a workplace ballot, the membership accepted the companies offer.

Dudsons

Dudsons have agreed the pay offer of 2.04% following a workplace ballot.

Armitage

Recruitment is ongoing at this company, 2 new stewards have recently been elected and are both in the process of starting their training.

Portmeirion

Recruitment is ongoing at this company and the 2015/2016 pay offer of 39p or 2% whichever the greater + 5 days bereavement leave paid for immediate family. An additional steward has recently been recruited which gives 2 stewards at that site.

This company have also agreed the pay offer of 2.04% following a workplace ballot.

Twyfords

This company has recently been brought by 'Geberit' who are closing the Kidsgrove site in stages. The payroll and admin are now at Worcester, as for shop floor it will be wrapping up they are just unsure yet when it can happen.

The Pay Award for this year is 2.5% payable from the 1st January 2016, with a unanimous acceptance.

Endeka

At the moment Endeka is struggling with their business. They are doing their best to keep costs down to preserve jobs.

The Pay Award for this year is 1% payable from first week in January 2016, which had 1 rejection.

We managed to expand recognition agreement to staff on the site, and are now setting up recruiting on site.

Walther Trowal (formally METAREF)

Business is slow to the point of profits as low as when recession was at start.

The Pay Award for this year is 2% payable from the 4th April 2016, which had 1 rejection.

During the pay talks, we were also able to get all the members Body warmers, with the maintenance to get thermals, so members were very happy.

Steelite

This was a tough negotiation and agreement could not be reached so it was agreed to put out 2 proposals and let the members decide, the vote went in favour of the unions recommendation which was for 20p per hour + 2.5% on shift premiums and bonus payments payable from the 1st January 2016, the back pay was paid on 10th March 2016.

Talks with Wedgwood, Churchills and Denby/Burleigh are underway.

MANUFACTURING SECTION

GMB's Manufacturing Section membership stands at 113,000 and declines each month as it has done for some time. This is partly due to unavoidable job losses in manufacturing industries in which GMB is organized but is also due to falling recruitment (down a third in the last decade) and a lack of new GMB initiatives in industries that are stable or growing. Improvements in these areas could well produce a revival of GMB's fortunes in manufacturing.

Since last Congress the Manufacturing Section National Committee, chaired by President Ronnie Waugh, has met regularly to review Section activities and receive reports from Section Officers on topical matters. The Committee would like to place on record it's thanks to all the shop stewards, branch secretaries and officers who work so hard in behalf of the Section members. Particularly warm thanks go to Jerry Nelson, who retired from GMB in February, for his committed and steadfast service to the Section as Acting National Secretary, a true friend to all GMB members in manufacturing.

The very wide range of industries and companies covered by the Manufacturing Section officials at national office - Stuart Fegan, David Hulse, Steve Kemp, Phil Whitehurst and Sharon Wilde - is reported on below.

Building and Brick Industry is causing concern in that house building is still languishing and brick manufacturers and building up stocks that they can't sell. It was reported to congress last year that this was exacerbated by the high level of imports coming in to the UK, this remains the case. However GMB has managed to minimize redundancies and credit must go to those GMB regions that have done sterling work to protect our members in difficult circumstances.

Aggregates and Quarries Plasterboard and Aggregates and Quarries are going well though with high demand throughout, and with a commitment from government for future road building our member's jobs in Aggregates and Quarries should be secure for the foreseeable future. There is a risk arising from green levies being placed on UK companies and GMB has urged a common sense approach to protect these industries

Tata Steel these have been really difficult times for our members. Tata announced recently that they were putting the whole of their UK operations up for sale. Following a strong campaign by GMB and other TUs on the 11th April Tata signed an agreement to sell its long products Europe business to investment office Greybull Capital this deal safe guards 4,400 members in the UK and 400 in France. The Strip business is now up for sale where potential buyers are being asked to come forward. We have met with senior government ministers and Tata Steel and expect and demand that they are committed to being a responsible seller.

Offshore Contractors Association in the Oil and Gas production sector over the last 12 months we have seen thousands of jobs losses all associated with the drop in oil prices. Some member companies have issued notice to leave the OCA agreement because they think there may be an opportunity to tender for work and undercut our members terms and conditions. All these issues are on-going.

Thermal Insulation Contractors Association (Tica) we have recently just agreed a 2 year agreement 2% 1st year, 1% 2nd year also increases in Radius travel in line with the hourly rate. We have a failure to agree on holiday pay and have set up a working party to try and reach agreement.

BAE Systems the Government has confirmed that 8 type 26 Global Combat Ships plus 5 Lighter Frigates and 2 Offshore Patrol Vessels this is good news giving 15 plus years work on the Clyde. On the Negative side the company and the government promised world class facilities with investment of up to 859 million pounds, this has been greatly reduced with around 100 million investment in the infrastructure still not enough to bring the shipyard up to the standard that we believe is needed to compete with other Shipyards around the world. The cutting of steel for the first Type 26 Frigates programme has been moved back to December 2017 this has led to our members working at other shipyards ie Rosyth and Barrow.

BAE Systems Barrow have committed to 1000 Apprentices over the next few years and they are in the process of building a new training school which GMB welcomes.

National Agreement for the Engineering Construction industry (NAECI) pay claim has been settled, from January 2016 members working under the National Agreement agreed to a three year pay settlement of a rise of 6% consisting of 1.5% January 2016, 2% January 2017 and 2.5% January 2017 all premium pay etc goes up retrospectively.

Construction Industry Joint Council (CIJC) working Rule National Agreement pay claim was submitted in January 2016 and negotiations are ongoing.

Hinkley Point C (HPC) this project has gone from one delay to another with regards to the Final Investment Decision (FID), nevertheless the EDF CEO Vincent De Rivas has categorically stated the project will get the FID in early May and will go ahead, all the relevant site sectorial agreements are all signed and National committees for Trade Union involvement are in full swing and are meeting on a regular basis both in London and Bristol

Construction Industry Overview investment has dried up on large projects due to the Conservative Governments campaign of austerity and the reduction of energy subsidies which has stifled the new build market of many needed large Power Stations and instead investment is being steered towards private enterprise entrepreneurial smaller energy projects using cheap European Labour under the Posted Workers Directive to

undercut UK companies and undermine UK national agreements. GMB is campaigning hard to highlight and resolve this problem both in the UK and in Europe.

United Biscuits Defined Benefit Pension a formal consultation regarding the closure of the Defined Benefit (CARE) scheme for United Biscuits came to a conclusion at the end of February 2016 with our members accepting a new proposal on the outcome of a ballot to maintain the scheme. GMB reps are now pursuing improvements to the United Biscuits Defined Contribution Stakeholder scheme.

BOC Ltd a ballot of our three bargaining groups of members, Bulk Drivers, Industrial, Professional and Administrative, and Package Gas and Production on a recommended 2% uplift on basic pay. All groups have accepted the offer.

Air Products we concluded a ballot of our three bargaining groups of members, Bulk Drivers, Package Gas Drivers, and Bay Cylinder Operatives on a recommended 3% uplift on basic pay. All groups have accepted the offer.

Nestle announced in July 2015 their intention to close their Defined Benefit Pension Scheme to our current and future Nestle members from 2016 and continue with a Defined Contribution Scheme. GMB National Forum Reps have engaged in a robust Campaign to defend the Pension scheme for current and future Nestle employees. In response to our campaign Nestle has agreed the formation of a Joint Working Party to look at the maintenance Defined Benefit Scheme with negotiations expected to produce proposals for our membership to ballot upon.

Nestle Purina Petcare Sudbury we have recently organized access to the Nestle Purina Petcare Site in Sudbury (Suffolk) where along with colleagues in the London Region we have recruited a number of new members into the GMB from approximately 100 shop floor Operators. We have agreed with the company to undertake a voluntary ballot of the workforce in May 2016 to determine if the workforce at the Sudbury site wishes GMB to represent them for collective bargaining purposes. Access dates have been agreed ahead of the ballot of the employees in scope.

McBride a Special Negotiating Body have concluded on an agreement with the company to establish a European Works Council which will encompass our membership in the UK at Middleton (Manchester), Bradford, Barrow, and Hull. The company has implemented a pay freeze from 1st July to 31st December 2016 which we are currently consulting our membership on.

Unilever we continue to press our (RPI +) pay campaign with Unilever for our membership at Colman's in Norwich and Warrington. The company has recently adopted a policy of offering below RPI pay offers and referencing local market conditions when it comes to negotiating pay. We have balloted our membership at Norwich for Industrial Action on the basis of a rejected 1.4% offer and at the time of writing our membership are engaged in Industrial Action at the site to persuade Unilever to improve their offer.

Furniture Industry following long protracted negotiations with BFM agreement was finally reached through consultation with our members. An original offer of 1.45% was increased to 1.74% for journeymen and journeywomen. The minimum earnings guarantee was improved from 2.5% to 2.85%.

The industry is more pessimistic concerning the business climate than it has been for some years. In the 4 month period leading up to October, many manufacturers were finding that new order intake failed to meet previous expectations and overall employment levels were falling.

London Association of Funeral Directors LAFD is an area association of the National Association of Funeral Directors (NAFD). Last year the 2.5% offer which went out for consultation was accepted by our members. We are now in the process of beginning negotiations for 2016/2017 pay claim.

The Institute of British Organ Building (IBO) GMB union and negotiating subcommittee of the IBO met to discuss wages and conditions payable from January 2016. Following consultation and a ballot with our members an increase was agreed for journeymen/women working in the industry of 2.2%.

The institute of British Organ Builders is the professional association to support pipe organ builders involved in making, rebuilding, restoring and maintaining pipe organs in the UK. The IBO is the industry's representation body which negotiates the industries Terms and Conditions with GMB.

Remploy we are pursuing over 1000 claims for GMB members dismissed following the withdrawal of public funding for Remploy. The hearing will take place at the London Central Employment Tribunal from Monday 6 June 2016 to Friday 1 July 2016.

The partnership between Remploy and Maximus an American based company is continuing to be successful. Meetings have been facilitated by our GMB office in Brussels with MEPS in Europe. Remploy recognised and realize the potential that exists for them to learn and develop their work in Europe.

Following the 1% pay barrier that was enforced previously from this government the unions have welcomed this release to enable meaningful negotiations moving forward.

Following consultation with our members a 2% pay increase was accepted which was implemented in September 2015 and a further 1.5% in January 2016.

Arlington Industries are the group that owns Rempower who supply automotive parts to the British Car Production Industry. Due to major expansion in the Automotive Industry and the Aerospace Industry, Arlington is rebranding the business as Arlington Automotive and Arlington Aerospace. Rempower will now be recognised as Arlington Automotive.

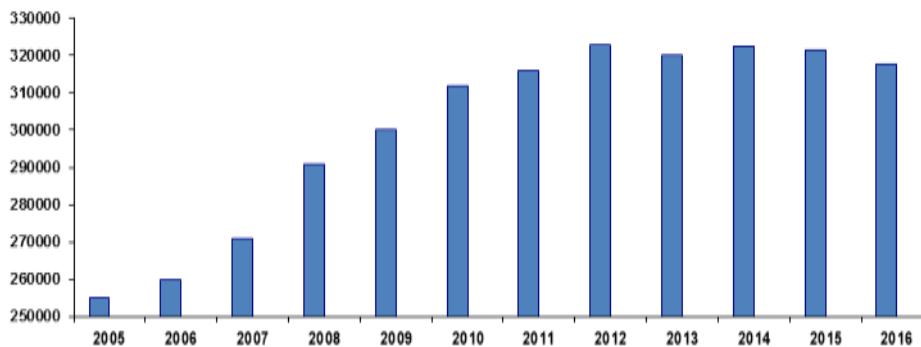
Following consultation with our members the pay offer of 2.5% was accepted for 2015/2016.

PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION

The GMB Public Services Section is experiencing a continuation of unprecedented challenges to protect terms and conditions of members of all sectors. The pernicious Trade Union Bill, making its way through Parliament, has focussed our priorities in our membership organisation planning in retaining members and identifying sector consolidation strategies to support Regions in their efforts to build strong workplace organisation.

The year on year pay restraint is challenging all public sector workers as the accumulated real term loss on pay stacks up. The Section's priorities remain the support provided to the Regions whilst organising the work of the Section Committee on key sector national campaigns. A new Committee was successfully inducted earlier this year and a greater focus of the Committee's work will be how the Section can better support the Regions.

GMB Public Services Membership 2005-2016



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.

Following the transfer of Brian Strutton to the Commercial Services Section in October 2015, the Public Services Section Officers and their responsibilities are currently Rehana Azam (Acting National Secretary, NHS, Civil Service and general public services); Avril Chambers (National Officer, Schools policy and academies); Justin Bowden (National Officer, Local Government, Contractors and Care); Sharon Holder (National Officer, HE/FE and Justice).

The National Committee extends its warm thanks and appreciation to Brian Strutton for his commitment to the GMB but particularly to the Public Services Section and for all the outstanding work he undertook whilst National Secretary of the Section and they wish him well in his new venture.

Local Government

Implementation of the Employers' two year pay offer is delayed indefinitely because Unison wants to ballot their members to take all out strike action. It also means that talks on one of GMB's key elements from the pay offer, a review of term time working, are on hold whilst pay is unresolved. GMB members voted 9 to 1 to accept the deal in a full secret postal ballot. Over 2 years the deal is worth 2.4% on the paybill - a 1% increase for most people in 2016 and again in 2017 - and between 2.41% and 10% for the lowest paid. GMB is clear, our members voted to accept the deal and we will continue to respect members' wishes and try and get their pay rise paid.

Meanwhile, the ideological attacks from Westminster continue and we must double our efforts to restore members' confidence in the face of cumulative cuts to jobs and conditions and prepare to defend the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

Schools and Academies

With the Education & Adoption Bill, Trade Union Bill and the forthcoming White Paper on Education we certainly have and are facing challenging times. We must try to use these vindictive initiatives to our advantage in order to ensure our current membership is maintained and we continue to recruit, organise and grow in schools & academies. To these ends we have revised our organising and communication strategy for schools/academies in order to meet these challenges. These Organising & Conversion policies have had SMT ratification and should now be national standard practice.

We now have National recognition with 34 Multi Academy Trusts, a number of Regional Trusts recognition Agreements and standalone academy Agreements. We now have nearly 25,000 members working in academies and although academy conversions slowed down from March last year to date, this is obviously

going to change with the proposals in the White Paper, whereby every school in England will have to be or in the process of becoming an Academy by 2020.

In line with GMB policy, each year we now submit a supplementary claim for £10 an hour as a minimum pay rate to all National MATs and this year the talks have centred around their legal requirement to pay Gideon Osborne's minimum of £7.20 an hour from April. I'm happy to report that we have been able to secure a rate of £8.25 an hour and £9.40 in London (Living Wage Foundation rate) in all schools run by 14 National MATs. In essence, it means that over 2,000 (of predominantly part time women) members are earning nearly £1.00 an hour more now than if they had stayed in maintained schools.

National Health Service

Following the conclusion of the pay dispute in 2015 the work of the GMB NHS Sector continues to be one of supporting the national committees, regional reps, regions and officers in responding to the challenges of a fragmented health service.

Despite the continued fragmentation of a health service due to government policy, NHS membership organisation continues to be strengthened. Overall NHS membership remains stable primarily, this is down to the dedication of GMB frontline workplace organisers who continue to support their members in what has been a continued difficult time in the NHS. The GMB proudly continues to campaign, organise, recruit and represent NHS staff against a bleak backdrop of attacks by a tory government. The campaign to have the NHS fully funded continues and whilst the campaign has had some success as the government announced the frontloading of the NHS budget we still have some way to go to achieve a fully funded NHS protected from the markets. The ticking time bomb of an ageing population with ever increasing complex needs is further creaking a fragmented underfunded NHS.

The GMB Ambulance Committee has focused their attention on the concessions secured for the ambulance service from the 2015 pay dispute and in an unprecedented move the GMB Ambulance Committee secured a separate evidence session with the NHS pay review body. Through this evidence session the ambulance committee secured some helpful support in the GMB overall efforts in achieving fair banding status for all ambulance staff including Paramedics. At the time of writing the GMB Ambulance Committee have agreed to undertake a consultative ballot on the key concessions secured with government who now appear to be dragging their feet to implement. The consultation aim is to harness the strength of feeling from members who will decide how best to respond to the non-implementation of key concessions secured in the 2015 pay dispute.

In the wider NHS the work of the NHS national committee has been one of supporting regions in responding to the accelerated fragmentation of local NHS trusts. In addition the national agreement which broadly continues to apply to all NHS staff is under review. The work of the GMB NHS Sector will be one of a continued campaign to protect hard fought terms and conditions and we continue to have some success in challenging employers who are looking to make savings in the pay bill to free up funds to deliver an adequate health service.

The GMB campaign to strengthen workplace organisation and to retain a NHS continues.

Social Care

The GMB-led campaign for fair funding for the social care sector continues full steam ahead. GMB has cemented its position as the lead Union for social care through a clear industrial and media strategy: working jointly with some of the enlightened employers like Four Seasons and HC-One, whilst robustly challenging those who do not share GMB's values for the workforce and those they care for. High Court legal action has begun against anti-union Avery after they derecognised us and discriminated against our female members over pay. The care sector remains fragile, and the sales, closures and acquisitions will continue as the sector consolidates over the next few years - reminding us again why care must be a direct debit only zone. As long as we maintain

our high profile, keep to our strategy and - as a Union - sufficiently resource the sector, it will continue to be a vibrant, high profile, proud and growing part of our Union.

Justice Sector

In the Justice Sector, the **Police Staff Council** review of pay and conditions for police staff continues to dominate the bargaining agenda since last year. 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. Talks, at the time of writing this report, have reached a crucial phase. Full consultation is likely to result in rejection of any present option unless aspects change and Industrial Action, if the employers preferred option is imposed.

National Probation Service carries on its reform from one single service into 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. Assignments since last year have focused on organising. Work is also in progress to broaden scope of membership and representation across the other twenty-one new Community Rehabilitation Companies.

Higher Education and Further Education

In Post-16 Higher and Further Education both sectors are in a process of flux but for differing reasons. Higher Education Institutions still find it hard to accept independence from state control and continues to mirror the approach of government with regards to public sector staff pay, offering 1% pay uplift in 2015 for the majority of higher education staff. Nonetheless, the final settlement in talks concluded with support staff on the lower pay points, and most significantly GMB members, receiving a 2.65% increase at point one to 1.2% at point eight.

Further education staff conversely received a 0% increase. However, a clear reluctance in consultation with further education GMB representatives to take industrial action, resulted in the offer being noted. A government announcement to reform post-16 education, namely Area Review, was viewed as a fundamental reason for the lack of confidence.

Contractors

The myth that because the client has apparently cut what it pays, the contractor cannot afford to pay our members fairly has been well and truly busted in a number of disputes and near disputes around the GMB. This realisation is good news for the Union and good news for our members. With the right leadership and planning our members can take on employers who have under-priced contracts or are seeking to maintain or increase their profit margins at GMB members' expense and we must roll this approach out across the Union.

In the GMB-led campaign for justice for those blacklisted by Carillion and others, the High Court hearing scheduled for May has focussed the blacklisters minds. To date, 92 GMB members received more than £4.5m in compensation between them, an average of £50k each, with GMB's lawyers' costs of over £3m paid in full by the blacklisters

Environment Agency

During the recent floods, GMB's media backed industrial strategy helped save 100's of frontline Environment Agency jobs as our national profile to publicise and celebrate the incredible work done by GMB members once again put the other Unions to shame. More importantly, our high profile challenges forced government into retreat over planned cuts.

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. At the time of writing the Cabinet Office have

started discussions with the Civil Service trade union to reform the already reformed civil service compensation exit payments.

Affiliations

GMB is affiliated to Public Services International and the European Federation of Public Service Unions where we are represented by Gary Doolan.

EPSU

Most of the recent discussions at EPSU have concentrated on the care sector. There have been a number of meetings of all affiliates where a draft report on the problems within the care sector were affecting public service providers across many European states. The report highlighted the most obvious problem that there is not enough investment in social care. In addition the report recognised failing to maintain a trained workforce. The report also received input from the public services international trade unions

An international analysis of pay in care occupations once again shows that these jobs, dominated by women, are often paid less than other sectors and below average wages. In an international comparison the study also found pay in the Germany care sector lagging behind many other countries. The report by the trade union linked Hans Boeckler Foundation underlines the urgent need to revalue pay in these occupations and properly recognise the skills and responsibilities required in many jobs across the health and social care sectors.

There has obviously been a drop off of meetings owing to the Terrorist Attacks.

A parliamentary debate on the pay and conditions of care workers has highlighted the fact that many care workers are being denied the minimum wage. Reviewing a report published last year, MPs heard that many care workers are not paid for travel time between jobs and pressure of work means that many have little time to spend with clients.

PSI

Public sector trade unions in the US have welcomed the outcome of a Supreme Court case that leaves intact their right to charge non-members who choose not to join but who benefit from the unions' collective bargaining work. This right had been called into question by a member of the teachers' union supported by a group of rich individuals and trusts. The case was referred to the Supreme Court whose deliberations ended in deadlock

REGIONAL REPORTS

BIRMINGHAM AND WEST MIDLANDS REGION

Since the end of May 2015 until the end of March 2016 I am very pleased to report that we have seen continued growth within our regional membership. We have maintained a plus over the 12 month period 2015 to 2016. Our membership has grown during that 12 month period by 4006 members. What needs to be taken into consideration is that we had the merger with the potteries trade union Unity in April of 2015. However, that being said, our continued growth month on month has also been a significant factor in maintaining that new membership that came in with the merger. Overall on the 12 month period our membership has increased by 7.7% and our regional membership at the end of March 2016 now stands at 56,343.

Our national targets continue to be dealt with within the Region, the first of those being Asda where we have seen a significant improvement in access to stores which has been a major help and contributor to growth within the stores. A prime example of this, if I may be allowed to go over previous years, is that in 2009 our regional recruitment was 199 for the year, whereas in 2015 our regional recruitment has increased significantly to 800 for the year.

GMB@Work continues to be the mantra of the day and continues to be our watch word when training new reps and new officers. The idea, as people will well know, is to empower representatives within the workplace to ensure that they deliver membership growth and continue to receive training of the highest calibre. In local government and schools the main emphasis, as would be expected, has been to combat the academisation of the schools. This task has in one way been made a little easier for us by the announcement by the government to force all primary schools within the UK to be academised as soon as possible, not taking into account, whether those schools are already meeting and in some cases exceeding targets set down by government and continuing to receive excellent Ofsted reports. This is not only a route for getting into the schools but it is now also one of our major campaigns to prevent the government from pushing this through. Our recruitment in the schools is not as high as it was in 2014/15 simply because our Region was one of the highest performers in previous years, along with mass redundancies within local authorities across the West Midlands due to the government's austerity programme.

Another major area of growth for the Birmingham & West Midlands Region is within the Care Sector. Care Organising weeks are continued to be planned into officer's diaries. There are still many areas of concern for our members in the Care Sector that we can campaign upon and capitalise on. Our designated Care Sector Branch starting from a couple of hundred members now stands at over 1,500 within the region and growing.

There is also to be a special report to Congress on the Care Sector where we will be discussing campaigning to prevent total collapse of social care in communities therefore our aspirations within the Care Sector continue and we must also continue to visit the homes on a regular basis and build upon our membership base.

There continues to be emphasis put upon the private sector and our Membership Development Officer and our organising team continue to seek out new areas of recruitment within the manufacturing sector and green fields sites within the Region.

There has been limited success in respect of Recognition Agreements over the last 12 months. The other major important developments across the Union as a whole and also in the Region is the attack on check-off facilities within local government and public services. The government has stated that they will remove check-off, which is the deduction at source, from members' pay packets within public services as they do not believe this is necessary. The GMB have taken a proactive stance on this and decided to convert all of our public service members to Direct Debit. We within the Region, have set ourselves a target of achieving 100% conversion by the end of February 2017. Since the instigation of the proposed legislation there have been a variety of

amendments put forward in the House of Lords and there do appear to be some concessions being made. However, there will still be a cost element to this if check-off is to remain and we therefore within the Region have decided to press ahead with the 100% conversion of members from check-off to Direct Debit and to hammer this particular policy home we took the decision from January 2016 not to accept any members on check-off within public services whatsoever and we intend to proceed with this policy. One of the reasons for this is that we do not believe that we should be a hostage to fortune for any future Tory, or for that matter Labour or coalition government, in respect of costs or withdrawal of the check-off facility.

The Unity merger has now bedded in very successfully and we now are making inroads into existing companies within the potteries and are now accessing new companies that have been difficult to access due to lack of resources by our predecessors in the ceramics trade union.

In conclusion for my Report of 2015/16, I must commend the officers, staff and activists within the Region. They continue to rise to every challenge that is put before them and they continue to not only meet those challenges but exceed our expectations. The success of the Region is paramount to everyone within the Region. Activists, staff, officers all have one aim in mind and that is to continue to provide the best service possible for our members across the Region and to grow and make our Region and therefore our Trade Union, the GMB, the strongest Union it can possibly be!

LONDON REGION

The London Region has endured mixed fortunes since our last Congress in Dublin.

Any report from our Region must begin with the sad passing of John Cope whose contribution to our Region and Union has been truly immense. A fierce campaigner for workplace justice and a fairer society, John had a major impact on shaping the GMB policies around social Justice. A lay delegate to Congress over many years John become London Regional Secretary in 1995 and although he was forced by the rules at the time to retire at the beginning of 2001 his legacy is still alive and well in the Region today.

John continued to play an active and full role in the Regions work up until his passing in April this year. The Region have plans to honour John's work which will offer others around the Union the chance to celebrate John's life and achievements.

The last 12 months have been very difficult and challenging for the Trade Union movement. The continued cuts in Public spending budgets has impacted on Public Services and those who deliver such services and Regional membership has reflected the downturn in Employment within Local Authorities core service establishments. Education membership continues to rise against a backdrop of Public Service membership in General being in decline.

Outstanding work at National level on the plight of adult care funding and the successful outcomes achieved for so many who were victims of the Blacklisting scandal have been exceptional campaigns fought with tenacity and determination. The Region would like the work done by Phil Read to be recognised in helping bring this about.

ASDA membership and workplace organisation continue to grow. The impending restructuring of ASDA membership servicing and the building of new communication and branches, are a genuine sign that a real resurgence in store reps in particular is taking place. Levels of Recruitment are increasing and the next 12 months bodes well.

The Regional Education programme is being refreshed and re shaped to take account of the Governments attack on TU funding. With changing times we are relocating our Essex office from Gants Hill to Romford. The

Norwich office is moving across the city to more suitable premises and our Baldock office has closed and staff transferred to a new office in Luton.

Regional Membership currently stands at over 100,000. Regional Legal services are working well in partnership with UNIONLINE although the volume of members still being unaware of UNIONLINE services is a cause for concern.

The region has adopted a number of new approaches ensuring that GMB@Work moves the organising agenda away from set visits to workplaces and more towards self-determination by lay members on the ground.

The Region continues to expand its vibrant and highly successful Equality activities. The Regional Women's Conference was an outstanding success, which amongst a variety of other engagement activities, produced a large number of delegates who were keen to take on Branch activities, workplace roles and engage in GMB democratic structures. The Region is rightly proud of Sue Hackett, Brian Shaw and the London Region Equality Committee for organising such an excellent conference and also planning the diverse and exciting range of engagement activities over recent years. Their work has certainly made a difference.

The Region wishes our new General Secretary Tim Roache every success in his new role. Whatever the challenges from the Trade Union Bill or attacks from political dogma the GMB will meet those challenges head on. The political work in the Region has again been a key contribution to the political success achieved in the recent London Elections. Team GMB has turned out hundreds of members to provide support to CLP's and candidates' campaigns. 200 GMB Members arriving in one constituency energised and transformed the spirit of local Party members who as in all elections were relying on the usual suspects to deliver the leaflets and "knock up". The attack upon Junior Doctors contracts should be seen for what it is. GMB fully supports our NHS and the Staff who work so hard for us within it. GMB members work at the BMA and they deserve our support and thanks also. At the time of going to press it looks like the Tory reign over the Mayor's office in London is over. A good note to finish on.

MIDLAND & EAST COAST REGION

The Tories press ahead with their blatant and dogmatic attack on the Trade Unions via the Trade Union Bill with their economic strategy playing havoc with manufacturing and central government budgeting restraints decimating the public sector. The fight to continue building the Region and the GMB has never been more needed.

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 recruiting well in Asda stores and the care sector as well as running specific school and academy projects across the Region. They play a full role in supporting the industrial teams with their recruitment weeks. In order to develop representatives and branches the Region delivers internal courses and branch training to shop stewards. Internal provision of training is to increase dramatically with the reduction of training funding by this government.

Since Congress 2015 the Regions Education and Health and Safety department has been involved in the management of the Regional Young Workers Engagement Project (YWEP) developing activities around setting up apprenticeship/traineeship programs and training Union Learner Reps (ULR's). The Education Department continues to run a successful 'Class of the Year' competition each term.

PUBLIC SERVICES

The Trade Union Bill has a disproportionate effect on public services for the GMB with the challenges to the check off facility. Consideration has not been given to developed relationships with some public sector employers, not to say the local council's economy as we used to pay for this service which is a loss to public service finance.

The Region is working with reps and branches within public services in all areas to get the transfer from check off to direct debit. Although this is a daunting task the pros are in that this process is assisting with organising via the membership updates and recruiting, which goes to show activity = recruitment.

In local government the Regions' facilities time is being challenged and reduced in Mansfield District Council. Historically the GMB have forged a good working relationship with this authority, the internal reps structure is solid with continual growth with members being well serviced; however since the independents have returned to power they have not been working with us as they look to save £4.5 million over the next 3 years. The story is similar around the Region with authorities such as Tory North Lincs Council pulling away from the Green Book. There is an expectation that politically this would happen within authorities under different political control.

In contrast some of the worst attacks to facilities time are from Labour controlled authorities. At Hull City Council the employer served notice to the Trade Union Convenors, there is expectations that facilities time will be reduced in Nottingham City Council and Leicester City Council, all Labour controlled authorities who are not only implementing Tory policy, they are pre-empting it!

Nottinghamshire Police are facing huge changes across the force with the budget cuts due to the formation of the strategic alliance which will amalgamate Nottinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Leicestershire forces. On the back of this the reps had a huge success in supporting our member in the overturning of a conviction for an alleged assault on a detained person; this was refuted from the start via the internal procedures on the basis that the member was being used as a scapegoat for negligence that was more attributable to the Police Officers involved. This case highlighted the different and less favourable treatment received by Police Support Staff in comparison to their Police Officer counterparts.

The Region continues to follow and visit the schools that change over to academy with lots of new recognition agreements being signed especially in Leicester County Council. This has become even more important since the government has pledged the transfer of all schools to academies.

In the NHS, Bassetlaw Hospital Trust deficit has massively increased with having to save a staggering £30-40 million over 2 years which is significantly more than other trusts. Despite this, membership continues to increase with the work from lead rep Lee Hill despite potential challenges to facilities time. In Nottingham University, Scarborough and Sherwood Forest hospitals we have continued growing membership in the face of challenges at Sherwood Forest hospital with changes to partners and the PFI deal with Skanska.

With continued outsourcing to external providers the Region is working closely with reps in Biffa, Interserve, Amey and Keir Cleansing Services. Keir recently saw spontaneous action in protest to members being sent home without notice - the members were blacklisted for raising a grievance, needless to say parity was gained - 100% was gained on site and reinstatement of GMB members who were dismissed following action.

A new branch has been established for Nottingham Trent University following organised work over 2 years that saw the GMB grow from almost derecognised to being the strongest union and negotiating better facility time.

COMMERCIAL SERVICES

Asda Distribution - after years of very static membership at this site the past eighteen months have seen membership increase by 50. This is attributable to the reps on site. Since achieving recognition at Brackmills two years ago the reps and members were keen to establish their own branch. This was kindly agreed by the

Region earlier this year when the Asda Northants Branch was fully formed. Reps at Lutterworth are particularly good at picking up on issues with National negotiations and have produced some in depth and useful challenges to Company proposals. Membership has grown by 110. This is due to an organised and motivated group of reps who ensure that they attend all new starter inductions and also deal promptly and efficiently with all industrial issues.

ASDA Stores - continued to grow in the region with the continuation of the National Phased Access Programme. The Action Team and officers visited every ASDA store through a rolling programme during which we recruited 345 new members and now have 23 shop stewards in the stores and GMB noticeboards in almost every store.

McCains/IKEA – membership was grown significantly at IKEA as over a hundred new starters were taken on by the company.

Moy Park Anwick - 250 members recruited since the introduction of new contracts.

Moy Park Grantham - Membership has increased to 225 on site.

Wilkos - The officer continues to chair the Quarterly Regional Reps meetings. These are well attended and all reps participate in agenda items, store reports and general debate. During the recent pay consultation if it wasn't for the intervention of the Midland & EC Region then an option to reject the ballot would not have been added to the ballot paper. The reps have voiced concerns that this pay deal, which was accepted, will seriously impact on recruitment and retention of members.

MANUFACTURING

Scunthorpe Steel Works has been attacked time after time with changes to terms and conditions but the Tories maintained a very neutral stance, in the words of Billy Brag "Socialism for the bankers and capitalism for the steel workers".

Tata Steel - as you know via the media and radio, a further 900 jobs are to go at the Scunthorpe Steelworks, along with the knock on effect of the site contractors and the local community. Negotiations are under way with a potential buyer of the Scunthorpe site and they are already asking for reductions in terms and conditions before there is any talk of investment in the site.

Our Convenor is working hard to keep as many of our members as possible with the skills they have and cross matching in departments is taking place.

Vossloh Cogifer - I am pleased to say we have concluded last year's and this year's pay deal. The members accepted a 2.5 per cent increase for 2015 and a 4 per cent increase for 2016. We have removed the bonus scheme for the members and got a bigger increase on the basic rate of pay and the ballot result was in favour of acceptance by over two to one.

Locally Shaune Clarkson and the reps campaigned. The impact is also felt throughout the community as we represent numerous contractors on site.

Harsco Metals - we have just recently finished two phases of redundancy consultation and I am pleased to report that the initial figures have been drastically reduced. We listed a number of guys in phase 1 compulsory but in phase 2 we retained everyone who wanted a job and two guys went voluntarily, which is a good result considering the earlier figures put to us.

In the Derbyshire and Leicester area, Rolls Royce - Trident is an on-going issue for workers at Rolls Royce. If Trident is scrapped it would have a massive impact on Rolls Royce workers, the local community and local businesses. There could be around 3,000 job losses at Rolls Royce and also job losses from the 300

companies that supply Rolls Royce. Reps attended a GMB conference in Newcastle and spoke on behalf of their members.

Jeldwen - the three sites in Melton Mowbray continue to increase the GMB membership and we look forward to the 2016 Pay Review discussions, which we are in the process of arranging.

The Region continues to grow despite the adverse political and economic climate; this is due to the hard work of branches, reps, officers and staff with a belief in the GMB Trade Union movement in the day to day struggles to improve the lives of working people.

NORTHERN REGION

GMB@Work

Workplace consolidation is as per GMB@Work. Our 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.

Supporting the Region's GMB@Work strategy is 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 and action form part of the Northern Region's approach to recruitment, workplace organising and retention. We have been successful in this approach and the Northern Region was able to achieve recognition through the CAC and Voluntary Agreements in: Washington Metal Works, Aviator Newcastle Ltd - (Newcastle Airport), Active Northumberland, Thirteen Group Ltd (Housing Company), Willmot Dixon Partnerships (Home Group).

The Regional Organising Team is integral to the Region's GMB@Work process and organising culture.

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 Trade Union Bill and particularly the issues around check off and our strategy regarding migration to direct debit. Organising priorities continues to be in Asda; School Support Staff in Team Areas; Security; 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; Energy and Utilities; NHS; Private Contractors; Apprentices; ASDA; Schools; Academies; 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, 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. Indeed for Powerhouse read "Poorhouse", such is the poverty of ambition of Tory politicians for our area. Government continues to attack the fabric of our Region, with no discernible regional economic policy or progress on Government procurement or infrastructure support.

The outlook is not good for the next few years, and the outcome of the EU referendum will be crucial to our Region. This Region desperately needs 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 Government's proposals for Devolution in our Region and the imposition of Elected Mayors for between £10 to £30m pa for 30 years, will only replace a fraction of the cuts that have been made between 2010 and 2020. Elected Mayors for Mayoral Combined Authorities have no political legitimacy in our Region and Labour in the Northern Region needs to get off its knees and stop doing George Osborne's dirty work and should show some initiative, strategy, acumen and fire in their bellies. Given the way that some Labour Authorities have cut facility time since 2010 and the way that some have sought to implement the Tories' Trade Union Bill/Act, with relish, the future for local politics in this Region does not bode well. There are some very notable exceptions such as in Cumbria, Durham and Gateshead. But regrettably it seems that local government is in effect local administration of Whitehall dictat, which probably explains some of the apathy that pervades local elections. Labour needs to understand that it is the "Establishment" Party in most of our Region and our members, families and communities take the current state of play in our region with the attacks on democracy, facility time and trade unions extremely seriously.

That being said, the GMB Northern Region has a really good working relationship with some excellent Labour MPs and Councillors. Their support is essential as we seek to integrate our industrial and political wings of our Region.

NORTH WEST & IRISH REGION

The North West and Irish Region continues to grow at a steady rate. The increase in membership has been achieved in both the North West and Northern Ireland areas of the Region. Our continued growth and performance across the whole of the Region could not have been achieved without the continued passion and dedication of GMB staff and the committed Activists we have in the Region. It is evident from our membership trends that increasing numbers of individuals in untypical trade union workplaces are reaching out for support.

In accordance with GMB@Work, Organisers have allotted time to carry out recruitment. Each Organiser has two days per week for this part of the role, these days have also been used to highlight to members the

challenges we face from the Trade Union Bill in particular the conversion of members from check-off to direct debit.

The Branch Development continues to be monitored and reviewed as the year moves on. The Education of our Activists has always been a key factor in developing our Activists and we continue to strive to improve in this area. Courses carried out this year include Branch Development, Congress Explained, Pensions and TUPE. A new initiative this year, implemented by the Education department, was a workshop on Mental Health Awareness in the Workplace. The feedback from this was extremely positive and our aim is to make this a permanent feature of our course programme. It should be noted that female attendance at courses continues to rise.

Women's Conference

Over 100 Activists attended the 16th Women's Conference. The Conference featured presentations by Sylvia Lancaster from the Sophie Lancaster Foundation. Sylvia's daughter Sophie was a victim of crime and died of injuries suffered just for being different. Other speakers were Michael Brown and Michelle Livesey on Claire's Law, which dealt with domestic violence. Asda female manager on leadership. Betty Tebbs, a peace campaigner who spoke of her many years of struggle and has now set up a women's group to fight for equality and peace. Simpsons Solicitors on the Trade Union Bill.

Justice Campaign

This second annual Justice Campaign was held in Manchester. This included speakers from different backgrounds and walks of life but who all share the common goal of seeking justice. The Conference received a considerable amount of media coverage giving fresh impetus and momentum to these campaigns. Speakers included Mike Mansfield, QC; Helen Steel, Spycops; Sylvia Lancaster, Sophie Lancaster Foundation; Howard Gayle, Give Racism the Red Card; Michelle Livesey, Claire's Law; Andy Burnham, Labour MP; Alistair Morgan, Anti-corruption Campaign; Peter Jukes, Author.

The North West Equality Conference took place and in line with the regional policy of promoting activists, one of our reps from Landis and Gyr gave a presentation on the work she has been involved in as part of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign.

I am pleased to announce that we have filled the vacant youth seat on the Forum. This comes at a time when our young members in the Region are extremely active and are heavily involved in promoting and developing their own campaign such as £10Now. They are also building a Regional Young Members Network and setting themselves challenges which, given the level of commitment shown by our key young member activists, I have no doubt they will achieve.

The Region recognises the need for effective communication. Social media is widely used across the Region with many activists and Branches now on both Twitter and Facebook. The Region continues to look to improve this area and encourages Branches to set up a website.

The Regional Public Services membership continues to be hit by the austerity policy of the Tory government. Local Government members were fully briefed on the pay offer which Nationally the GMB has accepted.

Recruitment

In the 11½ months from 1 May 2015, the North West & Irish Region has recruited just over 8,535 new members of which 4,083 were check off and 4,424 direct debit.

The breakdown by Section is Commercial Services – 4,509; Manufacturing - 1,183; Public Services - 2,834. The breakdown of each Section by check off and direct debit is Commercial Services DD - 2,367; Commercial Services CO - 2,140, Manufacturing DD – 744; Manufacturing CO – 439, Public Services DD - 1,309; Public Services CO - 1,525. Out of the 8,535 members, 2,907 were recruited on the Web.

Targets

Asda Stores

The Asda campaign continued at a pace up to October 2015 with teams continuing to recruit in the remaining stores that had not yet received their initial first set of recruitment hits. From October onwards, with the exception of the Christmas period, all Asda stores recruitment had been 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 11½ months has resulted in 1,320 new members and every store in the Region has now been visited as part of the first time visits access campaign

Schools

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 since January 2016.

Total new recruits in Schools (including Academies) since the 1st May 2014, is 550.

NHS

Total new recruits since the 1st May 2015 is 325 with the Ambulance Service (National target) accounting for 118, East Lancs Hospital trust (National target) 47, ISS Mediclean (National target) 24. Other areas of significant recruitment have been the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (NI) 37. Pennine Acute NHS 19.

Regional Recruitment Targets

Care Sector

Northern Ireland ROT continues to target Care Homes as ASDA Recognition does not cover Northern Ireland. ROT Officers in the NW started up their Care campaign in earnest from November 2015. Recruitment in the Care Sector was 1,068 with Meridian Care (specific ROT target) accounting for 244, Four Seasons 303 across both NW and NI, HC-One 231, Praxis Care (NI) 79, CLS 71, Larchwood 75.

Noonans (Resource) Northern Ireland

Noonans is a Contract Company in Northern Ireland which is consistently visited by the ROT Team (NI) with its main target being the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). In the last 11½ months we have recruited 68 new members, of which 40 came from the PSNI Contract.

Chadwick Hotel

This recruitment campaign achieved recognition following a voluntary recognition from a CAC application, 26 members were recruited.

Travis Perkins

The ROT responded a lead within this company during the early part of 2016 which has resulted in 29 new members being recruited so far, campaign on-going.

Wincanton (ASDA Distribution Contract) Rochdale

The ROT continues to recruit within this contract post recognition. During the last 11½ months a further 26 new members have joined.

Greencore

Another lead that was given to ROT in early 2016 and this campaign is still on-going and we have recruited 29 so far.

Local Government

With regards to direct Local Government employees, excluding Schools, Academies and contracted out / arms-length service providers, the recruitment for this group is 477 over the past 11½ months.

Activist Weekend

The Region held its first Activist Weekend which was well attended with in excess of 70 delegates present. There were a variety of speakers including Tim Roache, GMB General Secretary, Theresa Griffin/Afzal Khan, Euro MP's and Jim McMahon, MP. Ross Holden and Ruth Pitchford gave four presentations on the work of the young members.

Following presentations by the Regional Senior Organisers, Workshops were set up to enable activists to discuss the different aspects of the Trade Union Bill and provide feedback.

The Region continues to show growth but we will not sit on our laurels, we will continue to look at what we do, examine our structure, redevelop our strategy to ensure we are best placed to develop and grow our Region.

GMB SCOTLAND

The start of 2015 was extremely challenging for GMB Scotland.

There was a significant decline in membership, particularly in Public Services and Manufacturing. The size of the manufacturing sector has halved in Scotland post- devolution and the decline continued unabated in 2015. The cuts in public services also intensified, with the next wave of cuts across local government beginning to kick-in having already lost 40,000 jobs since 2009. Equal Pay continues to be a big issue across Scotland and as we know, dealing with equal pay is costly and resource intensive.

There were changes in the leadership of GMB Scotland moving into the last quarter of 2015 and membership has started to stabilise. Moving into 2016, membership has actually started to grow although we continue to haemorrhage jobs in manufacturing industries.

Some of the job losses in manufacturing could be anticipated as the work on the aircraft carriers comes to an end but there has been a litany of job losses and closures in companies like Fife Joinery, Bi Fab and throughout the offshore and oil and gas related sectors. Over 65,000 jobs have been lost across the UK as a result of the oil price slump in January 2015 and this has had a very pronounced impact on GMB membership.

At the time of writing the report we are also fighting job losses at Tannoy, Pfadler Balfour and Carron Phoenix, as Scotland's manufacturing problems continue. GMB Scotland has been campaigning hard against cuts and closures, wherever we can.

At BiFab Fabrication Yards where the workforce has been cut from circa 2000 to under 100, the Company tried to make further redundancies including our convener.

GMB Scotland has undertaken two industrial action ballots at BiFab and have successfully seen off attacks on union organisation and further proposed cuts to jobs. Our concern was the company want to move to a non-unionised, casualised labour model.

The hard work of our convener, officer and national officer has meant that the attack on union organisation has been seen off. The political lobbying work the union has done in order to secure the future of BiFab and to get contracts into the Yard also looks like it is going to bear fruit.

In terms of Pfadler Balfour the union has had a campaign to save the plant and mitigate job losses. The company are planning to shift production to their facility in Germany. At the time of writing the campaign is ongoing.

Carron Phoenix is a company that is over 200 years old. In April 2016 the business advised us that they wanted to end production, their plan is to move the work to Eastern Europe despite the business being profitable and having a full order book. The GMB Shop Stewards from the site have met with Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister, and local politicians as part of our fight to save jobs. The fight is ongoing and looks set to be a high profile campaign.

Over the past twelve months GMB Scotland has been at the forefront of the campaign to protect jobs in the defence manufacturing sector. Although there are strong opinions about the Trident Successor Programme, the fact remains that it is going to be crucial to retaining jobs at Faslane, Coulport, Rosyth and BAE Systems on the Upper Clyde.

Rosyth was privatised by Thatcher and almost closed by John Major with devastating consequences for the local economy. Rosyth currently has about 2000 workers who have in the most part been involved in building the new Aircraft Carriers. Rosyth has been trying to diversify for when the Aircraft Carrier work comes to an end.

However there is little or no work in the offshore sector and as GMB has consistently pointed out the renewables industries has done little in terms of creating manufacturing jobs in the UK. Rosyth has now secured work in the renewable sector which is great news but it is not sufficient to keep the workforce fully employed. GMB members at Rosyth are already working on components for the Trident Successor Programme; there is a prospect of 30 years work at Rosyth from the Trident Successor Programme.

The fact is the debate in Scotland about the Trident Successor Programme has been a diversion which has allowed the Tories to attack the building of the new Frigates that were promised to our members on the Clyde. The Tories obviously have a majority in the UK Parliament and they will be able to force the Trident Successor Programme through, while support for renewal will also be found on Labour benches too.

However with the focus on Trident it is clear the Tory Government has been planning to take work on the surface fleet, promised to the Upper Clyde out of Scotland and move it down south. At the time of compiling this report we are facing up to half the workers on the Upper Clyde being sacked. GMB has exposed the Tory plans which will devastate if not end large scale shipbuilding on the Upper Clyde. The political and public campaign about the future of BAE Systems on the Clyde is ongoing.

There has been some positive news at Ferguson Marine which has re-opened but the conditions there remain challenging, not least ensuring the re-establishment of full trade union recognition and collective bargaining. By next Congress hopefully we will have more to report on Ferguson's.

It has been not been all doom and gloom in manufacturing. Due to the hard work of our activists and officers we have secured new recognition agreements at The Main Tool Company and FTV Proclad Int Ltd.

In terms of Commercial Services of the Union, GMB Scotland has continued to perform reasonably well; we have had growth in areas like SGN and Asda. We now are developing a Shop Stewards Cadre in Asda in GMB Scotland.

In Public Services, GMB has been active in campaigning against the Scottish and UK Government's austerity cuts.

We are currently balloting for industrial action in Glasgow City Council; we have also been fighting hard on equal pay. The high profile campaign which we are running on equal pay in Cordia, which is part of Glasgow City Council and in the likes of North Lanarkshire Council has helped to stem the decline in membership and restore confidence in GMB Scotland as a fighting and campaigning union. GMB Scotland has sent a very clear signal that we will fight cuts to our members' terms and conditions of employment and are utterly determined to secure favourable terms for our members in Local Government. We are also in the middle of a campaign in Dundee City Council on attacks to our members' terms and conditions of employment.

A new recognition agreement has been secured in Midlothian Council; a small council where we were formally not recognised.

For the first time in many years GMB Scotland has been growing in the NHS in Scotland. Our traditional base in the NHS in Scotland has been the Ambulance Service. There are a number of campaigns in the Ambulance Service and our organisation remains strong.

In private care, GMB Scotland is currently putting together a political, media and industrial campaign on pay and conditions.

Our activists in the Highland & Islands deserve particular credit as they are one of the few areas that have consistently grown in the past 12 months.

There are too many individual campaigns in Public Services to give everyone the credit they deserve; but from the Ayrshire coast to Midlothian; from the Borders to the Highlands and Islands Scotland is improving our performance, raising our profile and starting to grow our membership.

There have been very significant changes in our Branch structure, amongst our officer force and amongst our lay activists over the past 12 months. We are also putting great emphasis on campaigning and communicating to our members. We have very significant investment planned in our lay activists over the coming months and are very grateful for the support we have had from GMB nationally as we seek to transform the prospects of GMB Scotland.

It has been a challenging period for GMB Scotland but there are real signs of recovery in our performance as we come into Congress 2016.

SOUTHERN REGION

Southern Region continued our GMB@ Work based organising and recruitment ethos resulting in some 3% growth in membership over the last year.

The dedication within the Region to organising and representing vulnerable workers has proved that working people trust the GMB as the champion of working people. Not unlike the founder of our great Union, Will Thorne, we in the Region do not accept employer manipulation, victimisation, exploitation and abuse of working people. We organise to win.

Our organising within target industries continues to prove successful especially in schools, academies, contractors and ASDA through our well-resourced organising team who are key to our successful campaigns.

We have had some notable industrial dispute successes over the last year especially in ISS Woolwich, Carillion at Swindon, NSL at Brighton and Hove, Aramak in South London, Mitie at Epsom Hospital, to name but a few.

We achieved a number of Recognition Agreements after well published campaigns in Tempay, Mitie, Graham Care, Empark and the newly privatised South East Ambulance Service Patient Transport to name but a few. In addition, we have secured a Recognition Agreement with B H Live, a leading leisure and event operator and social enterprise, who have secured the contract from the Council for the Bournemouth International Centre where we are holding this year's GMB Congress.

Many employers in the Region continue to test the metal of the GMB which becomes more tempered by the day as members gain confidence in their union while attracting new members winning the battles with confidence.

There was a very successful Tolpuddle Martyrs event in Dorset in 2015 against all the opposition that the South West TUC could throw at us for organising an event to support our disabled members, our unemployed members and our low paid members. Again in 2016 there will be a well organised Tolpuddle event for GMB members where any member can have free camping on the week leading up to the main event of the weekend of the 16/17th of July. We hope to see members from across the UK take advantage of this facility for this historical event. The GMB flag will fly high that week.

This year we had our first and very successful Regional Women's Conference which saw 55 delegates discussing and debating matters relevant to women at work, in the home and in the community.

Our Equalities section in the region reaches out to all sections of our membership creating an inclusive, representative GMB in the workplace and the community.

Our political strategy in the region embeds the principle of No blank cheques for politicians, No support for Career Politicians, No place for "pop up" politicians. If a politician wants GMB support it is imperative that they support our members in their community and at work, especially supporting education, health and employment rights.

The whole region is in campaigning mode all year round with officers and staff continuously supporting branches, activists and members.

The Anti-Trade Union legislation has spurred us on to ensuring that we transfer our members who are paying their union contributions through their wages to paying by Direct Debit. The government is passing their anti-union legislation onto local employers to implement by way of levering charges on the union for having members contributions deducted from wages. GMB will not fund public service employers to substitute for government spending cuts. We are adamant to protect our members hard earned contributions hence our drive to maximise our transfer to Direct Debit.

GMB WALES & SOUTH WEST REGION

Once again, in the interim period since Congress 2015, 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 the organising strategy that underpins them, particularly the very effective retention work that is undertaken.

The Region continues to campaign for rights at work and social justice for our members and their families, and, as this report is being written, is playing a proportionate part in facilitating the return of a Labour Government to the Welsh Assembly.

Commercial Services

As of the end of March the Region has 22,952 members.

Asda Officers continue their programme of store visits throughout the Region. Store density information has been analysed and officers will strive for 100% membership within these workplaces, though some sites are increasingly challenging. A dedicated training course of Asda Representatives will be rolled out during the year to ensure the spirit of GMB@Work is at the heart of organising within all stores. The recruitment figure at the end of 2015 was 1489, an increase of 49 from the previous year. At the end of March 2016, the Region has recruited 219 new members. RSSG meetings are well attended and the Region has a Representative on the National Forums and NSSG.

Asda Distribution Representatives utilise 8 recruitments days annually to access and recruit new starters. A three year pay deal was agreed in November 2015. The Region has three Representatives within the NJC. In Utilities, Welsh Water and WPD membership is well organised and recruitment steady. NPower are in the second of a two year deal but there are concerns over the future of Aberthaw Power Station with the phasing out of coal fired power stations. Wessex Water membership is improving and a four year pay deal has recently been agreed. WWE membership start the second of a two year pay deal and a ballot is underway regarding changes in the pension scheme. Redundancies and closure of the defined pension scheme within Bristol Water

have taken place following a poor OFWAT review. Membership within South West Water is currently in dispute regarding their pay offer and despite conciliation this may lead to an industrial action ballot. Stagecoach has settled pay claims in two of the three depots, though negotiations continue nationally regarding the on-going holiday pay issue.

Yodel has a network of experienced Representatives servicing all sites and they actively recruit and retain members. The quarterly meetings are well attended and workplace mapping routinely completed. Bidvest Logistics is a small site in Taunton and a new Representative is about to commence training. A Pay Conference was recently held at Wortley Hall and a claim drawn up for 2016 along with organising plans for the year.

Bidvest 3663 - we have two sites within the Region with a new Representative is about to commence training; existing Representatives hold recruitment events and monthly meetings. A Pay Conference was recently held at Wortley Hall and a claim drawn up for 2016 along with organising plans for the year. Sites are very well organised with the Region holding well within the National membership figures. Wilkinson - following a ballot a pay deal was accepted by members which awarded more than the 'living wage' with changes to shift premiums. The Company continues to struggle due to tough competition which has led to redundancies within security and head office.

Manufacturing

Regional membership, as at the end of March 2016 stands at 10,998 of which 8,972 is male and 2,026 is female.

Within the Manufacturing Section, overall membership in this section continues to slowly decline nationally and regionally.

The Wales and South West Region recently signed a recognition agreement with Proctor Bros Ltd based in Caerphilly and secured a back payment on the issue of holiday pay calculation - membership currently stands at 56 with on-going recruitment.

In Torquay, the Officer has increased membership to over 50% in a Company called Gates and Fences which produces bespoke products.

ThermoFisher based in the Blackwood area had issued a Section 188 in relation to changes to terms and conditions, they employ 220. At the time of this report it appears that through a tough set of negotiations a settlement has been agreed.

The Region has established a firm manufacturing base within the Lidl Regional Distribution Centre in Bridgend amongst warehouse staff, and has submitted a claim for Statutory Recognition to the CAC. The application has been accepted, and the determination of the bargaining unit awaited.

Public Services

During the last 12 months the Public Services Section of the Wales and South West Region has continued to face the on-going challenges of the Conservative Government's attack on Public Services which has resulted in a continuing reduction of budgets and hence a reduction in funding for Local Authorities which continues to have a significant detrimental effect on the numbers employed within Local Government and the ability of Local Authorities to deliver key services to their local communities. The Government's austerity programme resulting in the significant reduction in funding has resulted in the proportion of GDP showing levels similar to those experienced in the 1930s.

The Public Sector is also coming under attack as a result of the proposals in the Trade Union Bill – in particular the proposals to abolish the check-off facility in certain areas of the Public Sector. The introduction of minimum ballot thresholds and the attack on political funding of the Labour Party, and the onslaught on facility time – all of which are unprecedented, even for a Conservative-led administration. Notwithstanding the challenges that lie ahead, the regional Public Sector membership within Wales and the South West Region has held up relatively well given the significant challenges that this sector is facing. Our regional Public Services membership currently stands at 39,522.

A major challenge facing the Public Services Section membership both regionally and nationally is the proposal within the Trade Union Bill to remove the check-off facility. The Region has developed a strategy to convert members from check-off to direct debit which commenced with a mailshot to all Public Sector members affected, to which there was a very positive response. Officers, Branches and workplace activists are now carrying out a programme of face to face meetings as part of the regional strategy. Although not taking anything for granted, there is reason for some optimism within the Wales area of the Region as the Labour-led Welsh Assembly has challenged Westminster's right to impose this element of the Bill as they argue that Public Services is a devolved responsibility of the Assembly, and the First Minister has been quite clear that the Assembly will challenge the imposition of this element of the Bill to the Supreme Court if necessary.

Schools organising continues to remain at the forefront of our organising activities within Public Services given that it is one of the national organising projects. Given the fact that the Region covers two countries, again this offers us both challenges and opportunities as currently all schools within Wales remain under Local Authority control, whereas in the South West area of the Region the on-going academisation of schools continues and with the announcement by the Education Secretary that the Conservative Government intends to force all schools to become academies, we will be faced with further challenges to maintain organised structure within the education sector in the South West. The Region has developed a strategy in line with the national schools/academies organising policy to address this challenge, and currently we have a number of on-going campaigns within academies in the South West area and schools in Wales. Since September 2015, Karen Leonard, National Schools Lead Officer, has been working with the Region as part of its review of schools organising activity, which has involved interaction with Officers, Branches and Activists, and has been well received.

On a more positive note, membership density across the whole of the Region identifies that there are significant opportunities within classroom based staff and the Region continues to review its strategy to increase the number of members within this work group.

Within Local Government, there also continued to be an attack on trade union facility time, which has resulted in many Local Authority employers reviewing time off for trade union activities. In the main the Region has been able to demonstrate the value that Workplace Organisers add to an industrial relations landscape, with the opportunity and benefits of working with trade union representatives when faced with large scale restructuring programmes as a result of budget cuts.

The NHS and Social Care Sector across the Region continues to feel the effect of the Government's top-down reorganisation of the National Health Service which is not only having a significant impact on service delivery to patients but is also increasing the levels of sickness absence due to work related stress. We have seen the recent impact of the proposed changes to the junior doctors' contracts which has resulted in strike action and the refusal of both the Government and the Health Secretary to engage positively with trade unions. We are experiencing consistent attacked on the agenda for change programme as well as the accelerated contractualisation of service provision which, although the GMB is opposed to, we are exploiting the opportunity to recruit and organise in line with the proposals of GMB@Work. The Region is currently working on a cross-region strategy with colleagues in the Southern Region to re-establish recognition within SWAST, a full recruitment campaign has been planned which includes visits both to ambulance stations and holding recruitment events at the major hospitals across the South West to engage with ambulance staff.

The Social Care Sector is experiencing increased levels of volatility with a number of the major health care providers, for example Four Seasons and HC-One, closing homes and withdrawing from the sector. In addition we have seen Avery Health Care de-recognise the GMB which we are currently in the process of challenging on a number of legal fronts.

The Region continues to carry out consolidation campaigns target police support staff both within the South Wales and Devon & Cornwall police authorities. The Region has recently set up a new branch structure to support recruitment and organising activity within this area.

Finally, the Region welcomes debate in the matter of internal training and education, as this is key to the successful development of our activist base. We are proud to report that our bid for the WULF 2016 – 2018 funding round has been accepted, and will focus upon IT, literacy and numeracy skills training at the workplace. The previous project met, or exceeded each of the set indicators and enabled hundreds of members to benefit from training provision. Our challenged continues to ensure that Union learning is fully integrated into the quality, organising and recruitment agenda at the workplace.

YORKSHIRE & NORTH DERBYSHIRE REGION

Over the last 12 months we have continued our relentless campaigning activities on the industrial, social and political fronts. Despite the austerity onslaught and the general downturn in the economy within the region, we have managed to maintain our membership levels. This is despite the loss of thousands of jobs within the region in Public Services where we are highly organised.

Our focus has been on recruitment and retention and officers, activists and staff have been engaged in the range of innovative ideas designed to reduce the number of leavers within the region. We have piloted three retention training courses for workplace organisers, and branches are now being invited to adopt a measure which will see them pay the first six months reduced contributions for a member who may otherwise leave, but on the proviso that the member makes use of the regional learning and development opportunity delivered through our ULF Project. We hope that this will both reduce the number of leavers and increase the access to our learning and development opportunities.

The union has maintained its commitment to GMB@Work. Officers and branches have been involved in the roll out of GMB@Work Phase 2 which has seen the introduction of sectoral organising and coordination in the Care Sector with the launch of a Care Sector Forum and the coordination of our schools and academies membership through the continuing activities of our Schools Support Staff Forum. We have also created a Regional Bargaining Calendar, which is coordinated through officers and the Regional Organising Team and established an activists' data base.

Our activists' base continues to be the bedrock of GMB@Work activities within the region. We have introduced a new monthly newsletter/campaigning brief being aimed specifically at our 1200 reps and workplace contacts. This newsletter is called '**THE ACTIVIST**' and it reflects news from around the region and the great work that is done by our activists and young members.

Our Branch Activists Weekend was another resounding success attended by just short of 200 reps. Over a weekend in Leeds we addressed the issues of how to combat the Trade Union Bill, the threats posed by the European Referendum, the work of the union in communities across the region and how we can bolster our profile and activities in the Equalities and Inclusion area.

In October 2015 the region held its first all Womens' Conference which was attended by over 60 female activists, with guest speakers ranging from Anne Scargill to actress Tracy Brabin, together with Paula Sherriff MP for Dewsbury and Mirfield. This event will continue to be an annual fixture in the region from now on.

Our Young Members' Section continues to grow from strength to strength and has initiated an excellent campaign addressing the mental health problems that many young workers have to face as well as assisting in demonstrations and campaigns across the region. We have also continued to develop our ever closer relationship within the many BAME communities within the region, through our liaison with the mainly Asian taxi drivers' branches we have in Leeds and Sheffield.

A Friends of Kashmir/GMB Community Event attracted reps from all the communities and faith groups within Yorkshire. We will be organising an Equalities and Inclusion Summit to ensure that we are actively reflecting our membership across the LGBT, disabled and other campaigning areas.

There have been two major campaigns within the region that have epitomised our commitment to industrial and social justice. The Green Co dispute in Sheffield, which has seen two of our reps dismissed for raising legitimate concern, our members taking continuous industrial action and the union exercising its political influence on Sheffield City Council to drive out Green Co, which is sub-contracted to Veolia and which badly mistreated our members. At the time of writing, Sheffield City Council has finally terminated the contract for Green Co and negotiations are underway to reinstate our reps. I would like to pay tribute to the officer, reps, members and elected Councillors in Sheffield for their on-going support.

In Barnsley our campaign to recruit and organise at ASOS, an online retailer whose huge warehouse employs between three and four thousand staff is the biggest employer in Barnsley. A high profile media campaign has exposed the terrible working conditions within ASOS and our membership continues to grow.

Our members in the steel industry have been engaged with the region in the 'Save our Steel' campaign, which saw a national demonstration and conference in Sheffield in November 2015, and which has continued as the TATA Steel decision has had a major impact on our members in Rotherham and Stocksbridge. This campaign continues until we have had the assurances we need that the steel industry in Yorkshire is saved.

On the political front the region held a joint Political Weekend Conference with the Birmingham and West Midlands region. This was well attended and will be an annual occurrence allowing reps and activists the opportunity to broaden their political activities and develop their political education. In October 2015 we had our first Regional GMB Councillors Conference in the Leeds Civic Hall where we debated the areas of:

- Building a local economy
- Housing
- Jobs, pay and rights at work
- Engaging BAME communities
- What does devolution mean for Yorkshire.

This too will become an annual event and our GMB Councillors have asked for it to be combined with a training session on GMB policies, which we will ensure occurs.

The issue of devolution to the English regions to the so called Northern Power House continues to be a source of concern for GMB and other unions, as there is a distinct lack of coherent strategy on how local Council Leaders should be addressing the invitation extended by George Osborne.

In South Yorkshire for example, a deal has already been signed without any consultation with the trade unions or the council's electorate. Whilst in West Yorkshire consultation has been on-going, but there are differing views as to whether the financial incentives offered by the Chancellor are simply old, money being recycled.

In meetings with the Labour Leaders we have made the GMB's position clear, which is that as it currently stands devolution is a deception and being asked to take responsibility for providing local services which we cannot afford to run is simply a poisoned chalice.

Our regional approach has always been 'Agitate, Educate and Organise' and our Regional Learning Project has been a key factor in the success of the region over the last 12 months, and we are working hard to ensure that when this government does withdraw ULF funding that we have in place Branch Learning Funds, Branch Learning Reps and a Regional Learning Fund which will ensure we can continue to make learning and education a central benefit and therefore a positive reason to join GMB.

Finally, I wish to place on record the Yorkshire & North Derbyshire region's congratulations to Tim Roache, who during the course of the last year has been elected to the position of General Secretary of the GMB. On behalf of all members, activists, staff and officers in the region we wish him the very best as he steps up from being Regional Secretary to leading the union in the years ahead as our General Secretary.

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