Season’s Greetings to all our Members

#KILLTHEBILL
At the time of writing I have one ear cocked to the debate on Syria being moved by Cameron – a debate that calls for the bombing of Syria in an effort to defeat ISIL without looking at the costs and implications for life in the region after the Tory mission is accomplished.

The first question that I would like to ask the prime minister is ‘would bombing Syria have prevented the massive loss of life inflicted by terrorists in Tunisia or Paris, indeed would military action have prevented the atrocities that happened in London in 2005?’

What does history tell us?

We don’t have to dig so deep into the annals of history to see the repercussions of our military interventions on ordinary, peaceful people in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya and the devastation left behind. The collateral damage to infrastructure and society in those countries is immeasurable and almost irreparable.

Cameron says they will only target ISIL and not the forces of Assad as though people walk around with identification markers about their bodies. If Smart Bombs really are smart, how come a hospital run by Médecins Sans Frontières was hit? The only sure thing about smart bombs and laser guided missiles is that they cost lives and they cost a fortune.

It is amazing that we can find money for bombs but we can’t find money for life-saving cancer drugs, the finances to prevent hospital closures or to keep A&E departments functioning properly. Maybe an answer would be to stop selling armaments to countries like Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Cameron should remember the old mantra that you cannot bomb your way to the negotiating table.

With the festive season fast approaching the two ends of the pantomime horse, Cameron and Osborne, continue with their insane attacks on those at the bottom of the income ladder.

He’s behind you!

Whilst Osborne has been forced by an unlikely coalition of Labour, the Lords and public opinion, to reverse his threat to Working Tax Credits it does not mean they have been saved forever.

Every facet of our lives is controlled by political decisions, decisions that you are entitled to have a say in, but decisions that this government resents you being involved in”

FOODWORKER

The Trade Union Bill is not a response to escalating strike action by trade union members, it is a reward to employers who help fund this heinous party, a preventative piece of legislation aimed at removing our right of association and our right to withdraw our labour in response to attacks by exploitative employers.
Knowledge is power!
Knowledge is power and so the Tories attack the education available to working class people – increases in student fees, legions of teachers leaving the profession, the upsurge of ‘academies’ and major cutbacks to Further Education College funding – all the while the likes of Eton and Harrow prosper and grow.

Protect the Political Fund
For many years, the trade union movement has been the true opposition to attacks from political parties (all political parties). That is why the Tories are now out to break our political influence by attacking our Political Fund. Their hope is to damage our ability to campaign on issues relevant to our members and society in general.

Do not forget that it is not only workplace issues that we seek to protect through our Parliamentary Group. Indeed, over the years, campaigns on care homes, NHS, cost of funerals, housing, education, crime and the welfare state have been high on our agenda.

Every facet of our lives is controlled by political decisions, decisions that you are entitled to have a say in, but decisions that this government resents you being involved in.

Recruitment boost
Over the past 3 months a number of recognition deals have been secured that will see a major uplift in membership, but more importantly nearly a thousand people putting their trust in our union.

We cannot allow ourselves to become complacent about growth (or indeed survival) as an independent union. Both can only be achieved by being determined to succeed and by being dedicated to targets – as has been the case in our No 3 region.

It would be lovely to think that every one of our members could sign someone else up and assist us to double our size, but maybe each of us could adopt a New Year Resolution that we will assist where we can, talk to family and friends, speak to the workers in the fast food outlets about joining our ranks next time you visit or ask questions at regional council of what organising is happening in your area. All the above will help.

Finally may I take this opportunity to wish members, staff, friends and families a pleasant festive season and to hope that the New Year brings prosperity to all, fairness where there is injustice and peace in our world.

Thank you all for your support.
Ronnie Draper
General Secretary

NATIONAL PRESIDENT
IAN HODSON

Trade Unions have faced a relentless, fear and paranoia-based onslaught since 2010

Who can we trust to lead the charge against the Conservatives and turn the tables?

The Tories are slowly, but surely turning Britain into a pariah-state, with the most draconian anti-Trade Union legislation in the civilised world.

Their Trade Union Bill has nothing whatsoever to do with fairness, efficiency or common-sense. It’s designed purely to shackles workers, compromise their human rights and hamstring their ability to defend themselves against unscrupulous employers. The Conservatives will be the political arm of big business and the wealthy, but this Bill will actually send workers spiralling to the master/servant world of Downton Abbey.

This latest round of cruel, vindictive savagery will serve to further underpin the anti-worker legislation forced through by Thatcher in the 1980s, retained by Blair/Brown and strengthened by the last ConDem government. It will present workers with a stark choice – either they accept the scraps that the bosses throw from the top table and be grateful, or be prepared to break the law. This all come from the self-proclaimed ‘party of the workers’.

Who represents the workers?
In reality, when Conservatives talk about ‘workers’, they’re not referring to people who work in offices, factories, supermarkets, call-centres or on building sites. They aren’t referring to teachers, doctors, firemen or even police officers and they certainly aren’t referring to taxi drivers, bus drivers, binmen or care workers.

If the Conservatives really were the ‘party of the workers’, I doubt that they would have stood by and watched steelworkers being shafted, whilst kow-towing to Chinese industry. It’s unlikely that every state asset that employs huge numbers of UK workers would be sold for tuppence ha’penny to foreign interests and venture capitalists.

I also struggle to see how any ‘party of the workers’ would encourage the widespread use of zero-hours contracts whilst turning a blind eye to industrial scale tax-avoidance that puts public services and jobs at significant risk. In truth, as far as Conservatives are concerned, the REAL workers are CEOs, fat cats, hedge-fund managers, spivs, bankers, ruthless city slickers and anyone else with a few bob who wants to buy a policy or two.

The great Nye Bevan, founder of the NHS, once said, “No amount of cajolery, and no attempts at ethical or social seduction, can eradicate from my heart a deep burning hatred for the Tory Party… so far as I am concerned, they are lower than vermin”. That was said in 1948 and it’s remarkable that, over sixty-five years and various Tory governments later, the Conservatives continue to add value and credibility to Bevan’s opinion. Lord alone knows what he would have made of David Cameron and co.

How has the Labour Movement responded?
Trade Unions have faced a relentless, fear and paranoia-based onslaught since 2010, and I have to say that with a few honourable exceptions, the response of the Labour Movement has been impotent at best.

For example, the TUC’s response to virtually every government policy that has attacked Union members and working people as a whole, has been a catchy slogan, a snappy soundbite and a march or rally with giant balloons and banners galore.

This lack of meaningful, direct action has actually emboldened the government and contributed greatly to the position that Trade Unions (and, in turn, those at the bottom end of the pay-scale) find themselves in.
The big question now, is given the Labour Movement’s apparent inability to use its collective strength to fully mobilise itself against a vicious regime, who can we trust to lead the charge against the Conservatives and turn the tables? This leads us nicely on to Jeremy Corbyn.

**What does Jeremy Corbyn offer?**
The BFAWU was the first Trade Union to back Jeremy Corbyn’s campaign for the Labour leadership. We believed that Jeremy’s hopes and aspirations for a fairer society matched those of our members. Indeed, he has supported a number of our campaigns over the years.

For us, he represented a significant change from the Savile Row-suited Blairites that had led the party for years, and we were proud to back him. Nobody in politics or the media, however, could have predicted the effect that Corbyn’s candidacy would have. Not only did he engage with disenfranchised young people, he almost single-handedly brought lapsed Labour voters back to the fold. Countless people who had felt abandoned by Labour’s centrist, Middle England politics – and who had looked to UKIP and the Greens to champion them – were drawn back to the fold by Corbyn’s traditional beliefs, honesty and conviction.

As a result, the apparently ‘unelectable’ Corbyn (who had already been elected eight times by his Islington constituency), won the leadership by a landslide with the biggest mandate of any leader in UK political history.

**A real Opposition**
There’s no doubt that Jeremy Corbyn’s victory scared the living daylights out of the Conservatives and the Establishment as a whole. For the first time since 1983, Labour now had a leader whose policies would put clear water between them and the Tories. Suddenly, they were faced with real opposition from a political leader with an army of supporters and an overwhelming mandate.

The response from the Tories and their media friends was immediate, and offers an interesting insight into their in-built fear and paranoia of anyone who challenges their ideology with rational and well-thought out debate.

Within an hour of his election, the usual array of pre-drilled Conservative automatons were queuing up on TV news channels proclaiming that Corbyn was a ‘threat to national security’. Since then, the Tory-friendly media (including the ‘impartial’ BBC) has mobilised, grasping every opportunity to try and undermine his leadership.

**Disrespectful and unpatriotic?**
He has been slammed for not singing the national anthem despite being a republican atheist, blasted as unpatriotic for not accepting a freebie at an England rugby match, labelled as ‘disrespectful’ for not bowing low enough at the Cenotaph during Remembrance Sunday commemorations. He’s even been attacked over the style of *bicycle* he chooses to ride. In addition to this, the media have time and again wheeled out tired and discredited old Blairite self-publicists like Peter Mandelson and Simon Danczuk to offer their one-sided ‘critique’ of the new Labour leader. It really is desperate stuff.

**Every assault on Corbyn makes him look more honest!**
The problem for the Conservatives and their mainstream media, is that no-one is really listening outside their own, bloated echo chamber. Every assault on Corbyn seems to make him look more of an honest man of the people worth voting for. The reality is that we now live in a digital, internet age, where vast numbers of people pick up their news on the internet via *Facebook* and *Twitter*, an arena where Corbyn performs quite well and has massive support. What also makes him difficult to deal with is the fact that he’s a canny operator and has no qualms about going against ‘conventional wisdom’.

It’s worth noting that while young David Cameron was peddling ‘Hang Mandela’ T-shirts, Corbyn was getting bundled into the back of a police van having demonstrated for his release.

He changed the format of Prime Ministers Question Time in his first appearance, by offering questions emailed to him by members of the public, a strategy that has both trapped and exposed Cameron.

He’s managed to control the narrative at every PMQs without resorting to the Punch and Judy style of politics – Cameron’s comfort zone. He also offers no apology for his support of Trade Unions or his anti-war, pro-peace position.

**No Hiding Place...**
He hides behind nothing and offers something Conservatives are incapable of – genuine hope, change and equality. In a short time as Labour leader, he has forced the government to rethink it’s relationship with the vile, Saudi Arabian regime, and has sent George Osborne scampering back to the drawing board with his nasty Tax Credits bill, whilst taking the government to task on vital issues such as *housing* and the *NHS*. This is why the establishment are so frightened of him and are turning to the likes of Rupert Murdoch to smear him.

Their reliance on a man whose phone-hacking media empire helped cover up Hillsborough, spin police brutality against miners at Orgreave, free-festival goers at Beanfield, anti-Poll Tax demonstrators (not to mention against his own employees at Wapping) tells it’s own story. Is there a scum-swp deep enough that Conservatives won’t happily bathe in it in order to protect their twisted, skewed politics?

**Sad tidings**
As I write, I have been made aware of the passing of one of Region 4’s genuine stalwarts. Phyllis Hession was a former shop steward, Regional Council member and regular Annual Conference delegate who always took part in debates and contributed massively to BFAWU policy. We all have fond memories of Phyllis and her loyalty and conviction will be sorely missed. Thoughts go out to Phyllis’s family and friends from everyone at the BFAWU.

Finally, I’d like to thank all our members, representatives, office staff and full-time officials for their work and support throughout what has been an unpredictable 2015, and wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**In solidarity!**

Ian Hodson
National President
I just want to first of all thank the delegates to our Annual Conference for electing me to attend the Labour Party Conference in Brighton.

I was so happy at the time to be elected, but when Jeremy Corbyn was announced as the new leader on 12th September I was ecstatic. Surely this signals a new era for the Labour Party.

I knew before I arrived in Brighton that the Conference was going to be different to ones I had attended in the past, where the focus was on appealing to the centre. This year, you could sense the atmosphere and the hope – and change was in the air. Instead of the frustration of feeling on the outside of the party because you believe in socialism, this year we weren’t in a minority, we were in the majority for a change!

My highlights

For me as a delegate, there were four highlights of what was a great conference.

First of all was the Shadow Chancellor, John McDonnell’s speech on the Monday. Having seen John speak on numerous occasions at our union’s Annual Conference, (and remembering how engaging and how truthful he is about issues), I was concerned that he might have had to change his style to make it more appealing to all of the party. My concerns were put to bed when he delivered his speech.

It really surprised me just how many people there were of the same mindset. Of course, there are a few who aren’t happy with the direction that the party is going in, but the membership has spoken – and Corbyn has been elected.

The second highlight for me was the LRC (Labour Representation Committee) meeting, which I was honoured to be asked to speak at alongside our National President and many other great speakers from the movement. This meeting is always my favourite as it’s full of like-minded people and, of course, is chaired by John McDonnell. What surprised me this year was how many people were there – normally there’s just enough to fill the room, but this year it was packed, with an overspill outside! I won’t lie, I was very nervous, and that wasn’t made any easier when John appeared just before I was due to speak. He had to be slotted in, but that left me with the task of speaking after him, how daunting!

My nerves did get the better of me once or twice but the people there were so lovely and encouraging, which was reassuring! I talked about our Fast Food Campaign and why it’s so important for young people to know about trade unions and politics.

Obviously one of the absolute highlights had to be the Leaders speech. I was like a child at Christmas when he got elected and I knew that I would have a guaranteed seat in that hall when he made his first speech to the party. He certainly didn’t disappoint!

He talked about how disgraceful the media can be and how he admired the way that Ed Miliband handled the Daily Mail when they ran a disgusting story about his deceased father.
Opposition to the renewal of trident, austerity, kinder politics and the refugee crisis were all mentioned, but one thing that stuck with me was the issue of mental health.

I cannot tell you how great it is that senior political figures are eventually being serious about mental health. One estimate shows that 1 in 4 people will have mental health issues at some point in their lives. I’m not afraid of admitting that I’m one of those people.

The more this issue is talked about and taken seriously, the more chance we have of helping people who are suffering. We can rescue people’s lives and we will eventually get rid of the stigma that is attached to mental illness. I just don’t understand why it isn’t taken more seriously, just because you can’t physically see it, it doesn’t mean that it doesn’t exist.

Surprise, surprise..

Of course, the right wing media had a field day over both of the main speeches at the conferences – one of the criticisms being that he didn’t have enough policy. My feeling is to give the man a chance, he’s only been in the job for 2 weeks. I think he needs a bit longer than that to come up with policies and have them agreed.

Another theme of the Tory press was that he was going to take us all back to the dark days of the 1970s. I can’t comment personally on that period as I wasn’t yet born, but seeing as how 3.1 million families are set to lose £1000 per year – and with over 1 million people regularly visiting foodbanks in 2014/2015 – this current decade isn’t looking so rosy either. That’s just scratching the surface of the problems which the Tories have created.

Three cheers for Pauline!

The final highlight of the week was when Pauline McCarthy was elected to the Labour Party’s NEC (National Executive Committee).

This is the first time that a BFAWU member has represented the union on either the Labour Party or TUC’s National Committee, so it really is quite an achievement, and history in the making. This could also be further evidence that the party is taking a step to the left and socialism is taking over.

Congratulations Pauline, I’m sure you’ll do well!

Rachel Mullen
Branch 529

The Conference saw a number of events which our members attended – as the pictures show
THE TRADE UNION BILL WILL ATTACK WORKERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Barely six months in government unshackled from the Lib Dems, the Tories have wasted little time in revealing their contempt for the trade union movement. Eroding workers’ rights, slashing public services and tax cuts for the rich have always been their policies. But with their Trade Union Bill we are seeing the most vindictive, spiteful attack on unions (and those they represent) for decades, one that goes further than even Mrs Thatcher dared.

Conservative MP David Davis has described the Bill as like something from a Franco-style dictatorship. When Tory MPs are defending unions and recognise its threat to civil liberties, warning bells should be ringing in all our heads. It is laughably absurd for the Tories to claim to be ‘the party of the working people’, whilst at the same time pushing through policies that strike at the very heart of those who represent them.

Unions have long been vital for securing employee rights and ensuring they are enshrined in Law. Had it not been for the Trade Union movement we would never have seen the ‘automatic opt-in’ to the political fund and check-off arrangements in the public sector whereby union dues are deducted from a worker’s salary at source. While these arrangements are vital for funding the unions, without check off arrangements (which cost the employer nothing), unions will be forced to try and get all members to pay via direct debit.

The proposals on contributions to political funds strike at the heart of political campaigning. There is already a requirement to vote on the political fund every 10 years and members can opt out of paying it at any time. Whilst it is apparently OK for the Tories to be bankrolled by a few select members of the super-rich (whose money is salted away in offshore bank accounts), a transparent system that members have chosen to be part of is going to be shut down? This is an attack on funding the government’s official opposition – and a clear example of playing party politics with workers’ rights.

Alongside the Bill are proposals to allow employers to hire temporary agency staff during a strike. Arming bosses with the ability to recruit a temporary workforce allows them to treat their hard-working, permanent employees with contempt, safe in the knowledge that the strategic effects of any withdrawal of labour can be radically diminished.

In its headlong rush to neutral workers’ rights, what the government fails to take heed of is that agency workers usually live in close proximity to permanent workers and they are very often migrants. Pitching worker against worker, neighbour against neighbour and cultural groups against each other (and to hell with the social consequences) is cynical in the extreme. Agency worker representatives have already spoken of their opposition to this policy because of its potential to increase social divisions and provoke civil unrest.

This Bill is calculatingly divisive and will attack the rights of ordinary workers across the country. Falling trade union membership has had a negative impact on collective bargaining which, in turn, has led to lower pay and more exploitation in the labour market. The deck is already well and truly stacked in the employers’ favour, these changes will only make this situation worse, putting workers in a position with no voice to protest against unfair treatment.

Thompsons’ commitment
Since our foundation, we have been committed to the labour movement. We remain dedicated to championing, and protecting – through the law – the rights of working people. We stand shoulder to shoulder with our union colleagues as they oppose the attacks from the Tory government. Without urgent action the hard-fought rights that many people have given their lives for, from the days of the Tolpuddle Martyrs and the Chartists, will be lost forever. We are working closely with the BFAWU and all union partners to build a comprehensive opposition to the Bill and fight its progress at every stage.

Richard Arthur
Thompsons Solicitors

www.thompsons.law.co.uk
THE TRADE UNION BILL 2015

The Bill has now had its second reading in the House of Commons and at the time of writing this article (26th October 2015) is awaiting the committee stage. This article is not meant to be an exhaustive commentary on the Bill but presents an outline of how it affects you and your Union:

**Ballots for industrial action**
For any industrial action to be lawful there will have to be a minimum 50% turnout amongst the trade union members who are entitled to vote entitled to vote.

In certain ‘relevant public services’ (such as health services, fire services, transport services, education services for those aged under 17, border security, decommissioning of nuclear installations and management of radioactive waste) there must be 50% turnout and 40% of those entitled to vote (the entire membership) must vote in favour. Therefore, of a 50% turnout, 80% would have to vote in favour of action.

This increases the onus on the Unions to ensure a high turnout, yet there are no provisions to bring the voting procedures up to date by allowing electronic or ballots.

The ballot paper itself will need to provide ‘a reasonably detailed indication’ of the dispute, the nature of any action short of strike action envisaged, and the expected timetable for the dispute.

The notice of industrial action given to the employer will need to be extended from 7 to 14 days.

Whilst the action can start at any time, it will not be permitted to not last for more than 4 months. If further action is required after that period, there must be a new ballot.

All of this means that a more detailed procedure and increased thresholds for ballotting are required. This is likely to increase the burden on the Union’s resources and put it at risk of falling foul of the proposed new laws. This could result in costly injunctions or fines.

**Industrial action**
There is an existing Code of Practice on picketing. The bill intends to make at least some of that code law, including:

- The Union has to appoint a Picket Supervisor to oversee the action.
- That Supervisor must have Letter of Authorisation from the Union (to be made available on request the Police or any other person who reasonably asks to see it).
- The Union must inform the police of the supervisor’s name.

- The Supervisor must wear an arm band and badge.
- The Supervisor must be present at picket or contactable by police.

Again, these represent more hurdles for the Union to tackle and more red tape from a Government that promised to reduce it.

The burden on the Union’s resources is increased and puts it at risk of falling foul of the proposed new laws. This could result in costly injunctions against the Union. Failure to comply with the provisions will make the action unlawful. This puts both the Union and you as members at further risk – including the risk of being fairly dismissed.

As well as the bill, there is also Consultation to remove the ban on supply of agency workers to replace individuals participating in official industrial action. This ban has been law since 1973 (even surviving Thatcher). However, this government is considering removing it. If that happens, the impact of industrial action will be reduced. There are serious concerns over this, such as safety issues if agency staff are untrained or inexperienced. It may also result in the escalation of the dispute.

**Political Fund**
Currently the Union can use its finances to contribute. The Union’s political fund is not just about Labour Party support – it also extends to campaigns relating to members’ work and policy arguments at time of election, etc.

This again means that there is higher administrative burden on the Union as well as a potential weakening of its political voice both generally and on specific campaigns.

**Increased reporting requirements**
An Annual Return will be required – to report on industrial action over the last 12 months, to include the nature of the dispute, the action taken, turnout and ballot results.

A further Annual Return will be required showing all expenditure from the Political Fund (if spending more than £2,000 per year from that fund), relating to:

- Contributions to or payment of expenses for a political party.
- Provisions of services of property for use by or on behalf of any political party.
FOODWORKER

- The funding of any ballot by a union in connection with election to political office.
- The funding of conferences or meetings by or on behalf of a political party.
- Political party electioneering material or products.

**Increased powers of the Certification Officer**

The CO will be able to start investigations of their own accord (including acting on intelligence provided by third parties). They will have new investigatory powers where they suspect a Trade Union has breached statutory duties and may impose financial penalties of up to £20,000.

**Public sector facility time**

The Bill provides for powers to require public sector employers to publish information on annual funds used for trade union facilities, including paid time off for union officials.

It also provides powers for the Government to introduce a cap on the amount of money each authority has spent on facility time (as percentage of the pay bill) as well as a cap on the percentage of any relevant official as paid facility time. This may mean that full-time officials have to do more within branches if those caps are reached, again imposing further burdens on the Unions.

Whilst this will not affect the private sector at the moment, there is always a risk that it may be extended in the future.

**The broader legal context**

The European Convention of Human Rights gives you the freedom to associate, including right to form and to join trade unions. It also covers industrial action.

It is a qualified right, but are the proposed restrictions ‘necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security; public safety; the prevention of crime or disorder; the protection of health or morals; the protection of the rights and freedoms of others’?

No doubt this is a question that Unions and their lawyers will be addressing when the final version of the Bill is published.

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**Fast Food Rights Organising Day builds the UK movement**

**Over 50 young fast food workers, campaigners and activists crammed into a room in the TUC headquarters in London on Thursday 16th September for the first-ever Fast Food Rights National Organising Day.**

**Organised by the Bakers’ Union, the Fast Food Rights campaign, and the TUC, the event hosted talks about the growing movement for better pay, conditions and respect for workers in the global fast food industry. The day brought together workers and activists from around the world, and explored how best UK Fast Food workers could organise and match the recent gains of other fast food workers around the world.**

Speakers included American Fast Food workers involved in the *Fight for $15* campaign, young Fast Food workers who are building the movement in the UK and successful union activists, including strikers from the *National Gallery* and *Ritzy* cinema chain.

The first talk focused on the success of fast food workers in the USA in their fight for $15 an hour and union recognition, the second on how workers are building the movement in the UK and the third on lessons that activists have learned from previous strikes and campaigns. After the last talk there was a debate session on next steps for the UK movement.

Fast food workers in the UK are typically between 16–25 and are often at the mercy of exploitative zero hours contracts, low wages and poor working conditions. The movement itself has three demands:

- A £10 an hour living wage
- An end to exploitative zero hours contracts
- The right to join a union.

It aims to organise these young workers and show them the benefits of joining a trade union. **Ian Hodson**, Bakers’ Union National President, speaking at the start of the event commented: “Working in one of the biggest industries in the UK, Fast Food workers contribute significantly to GDP, but are often some of the most exploited and poorly paid.”

There were three aims for the day:

- To engage with these workers
- To engage with these workers
- To highlight how organising can improve their conditions
- To build on the success of the global Fast Food Rights movement and global solidarity.
Demonstrations were planned across the UK on Tuesday 10th November. The demand for a £10 per hour living wage is getting louder. A movement has been growing in the US which has seen wage increases and the right to form a union being won for some service sector workers. Now that movement is coming to the UK.

“It’s demoralising, because you’re part of a massive chain you feel weak, like you can’t make a difference. The hours were so long, making the pizzas was like being on a factory production line, monotonous, we were like robots.”

Lorna McKinnon (BFAWU Young Member) is part of a growing movement of fast food workers who are hungry for justice and fighting to make work pay.

“I went to a Fast Food Rights meeting in November last year. There were lots of other fast food workers there but there were also Fast Food workers from the States who were talking about how they had launched this campaign for $15 per hour and some of the successes they’ve had. It made me realise we weren’t on our own and we could fight for something better.”

The Fast Food Rights and £10 per hour Now! campaigns are fighting for fair pay, an end to insecure working practises and respect for workers in the service sector.

The movement started 3 years ago in the US. Billed as a civil rights issue, the campaign group Fast Food Forward supported by the Service Employees International Union put the issue of low pay on the political map with Obama making reference to the campaigners and the need to raise the Federal Minimum Wage rates.

A global day of action took place on Tuesday 10th November – the biggest mobilisation the UK has seen since the campaign begun. Campaigners, union members and workers are targeting fast food restaurants and outlets such as Marks and Spencer’s to demand £10ph now.

For workers like Lorna the campaign isn’t just about a decent day’s pay for an honest day’s work:

“Sexism is rife, my boss had this unwritten rule where he would only put young women in front of house roles so you ended up with all men in management positions. He would pick CVs out dependent on which girl was the prettiest and he would pick on my clothes choices and make judgements on how I looked.

Zero hours are one of the worse problems for us, they pit worker against worker as we fight for the hours. It’s completely unreliable and there is no consistency.”

However, Lorna and her colleagues are fighting back: “As part of the last day of action on April 15th we organised a demonstration through Glasgow. We marched to an area on Argyll street which we call ‘greedy bosses corner’ It’s a cross roads with a McDonald’s and a KFC. We occupied the KFC. The workers there were confused at first but when they heard us shouting our demands for £10ph and the right to form a union they stopped working and got on board with what we were saying.

“We are making a film about our experiences called Serving Up Change. With 6 million workers in the UK working for less than a living wage the fight for a genuine living wage will need to take centre stage if the much lauded economic recovery is to deliver for ordinary working people.

For workers in the service sector where turnover is high and employment precarious the fight for decent working conditions and respect at work is a necessity. The Fast Food Rights and £10ph Now! campaigns give workers like Lorna hope – hope that their voices can be heard and hope that where their sisters and brothers in the US lead, they can follow.

Nadine Houghton
GMB Organiser Southern Region
Serving Up Change: The Fight For Workers’ Rights

Serving Up Change: The Fight For Workers’ Rights will be a short documentary film exploring the exploitative reality of zero hours contracts for many young workers across the country, specifically in the UK fast food industry, an industry where workers are beginning to organise for the first time. It will comprise interviews with workers, animations and industry footage.

The film will also look to the recent struggle of Fast Food workers in the USA who have been fighting for a $15 dollars an hour and union rights. They have started to make real gains with their demands and we will explore how similar movements are now developing in the UK.

Zero hours contracts disproportionately affect those aged under-25 and they are becoming particularly widespread in a number of industries. The film will document their experiences of work and life under these contracts and show how younger workers and vulnerable workers can improve their working conditions by organising in the workplace and by joining a trade union.

Our objectives in the film

As young workers who have experienced the unfair reality of low-paid, zero hours contracts first hand, we wanted to create a documentary exposing their supposed ‘flexibility’ for the lie that it really is: naked exploitation.

The main objective of the film is to explore the real nature of working conditions for thousands of young workers on these contracts and to stress the importance of joining a trade union – and fighting back.

Post-production

We want our film to be available as an educational resource for trade unions, activists and campaign groups to use to encourage young people, and vulnerable workers, to join a trade union.

Many young people are completely unaware of the role that trade unions play in improving rights and conditions in the workplace. TUC and STUC initiatives such as Unions into Schools are doing incredible work educating young people about the benefits of union membership, and we want to help.

Young people represent the next generation of workers. By emphasising the role that unions can play in improving conditions and safeguarding employment rights, we hope to play our part in boosting the participation of under-25 year olds in trade unions across the country.

Who are we?

UniteFightFILM are a small group of young activists, trade unionists and filmmakers based in Glasgow. We formed in June 2015, in response to the Tory government’s fresh attacks on trade unions and workers’ rights.

Involved in community and workplace organising, and active in a number of trade unions (mainly BFAWU), we were brought together by a mutual love of film as a medium to effect change. We are all volunteers, juggling day jobs and work on a not-for-profit basis.

We are approaching trade unions, campaigns and organisations to ask for any donations towards helping make our documentary a success. For a small, one-off donation we are happy to give unions the right to use our film as an educational resource.

Conclusion

The involvement of those under 25 is crucial to the long-term sustainability of workers’ organisation. Serving Up Change: The Fight For Workers’ Rights is being made by young people, for young people, and we hope that it will help to improve the overall engagement of those under 25 with trade unions.

We need your help though. We are asking trade unions to consider a donation to help us create this resource for the future.

Whilst workers in your industry may not suffer from exploitative zero hours contracts currently, they are becoming increasingly widespread in many industries and represent a threat to your members’ rights that must be countered. They not only exploit the most vulnerable workers in society, they also undermine the collective bargaining power unions have spent a century developing.

Please consider donating to our project to encourage young people to join a union: an injury to one, is an injury to all.

With Solidarity, UniteFightFILM

Website:  www.servingupchange.co.uk
Facebook:  www.facebook.com/Serving-Up-Change-728492277279925/?fref=ts
Twitter:  twitter.com/serving_up
Instagram:  www.instagram.com/serving_up/
Email:  lorna.mckinnon@bfawu.org
November 9th 2015 was Equal Pay Day – the day when the average women stops earning compared to the average man because of the gender pay gap.

So, for the remainder of 2015 (a further 52 days) the average woman works for free. The date changes slightly each year as the gender pay gap narrows (good!) or widens (bad!). Last year it came around 5 days earlier (on the 4th of November) and in 2013 it fell on the 7th. Tiny improvements are being made but the fact it falls so early in November is worrying as it shows the lack of real progress actually being made in closing the gap.

The size of the problem
The TUC has been looking into this and has published figures highlighting the issue and showing there is a lot of work left to do. For example, there is a 55% gap in the annual earnings of top-paid women compared to men – which is simply shocking – and the average woman earns just 80p for every £1.00 earned by the average man – all this despite the Equal Pay Act coming into force in 1970.

Many women (especially those working part-time) are stuck on low pay and three-quarters of them in some parts of the country are earning well below the living wage.

The good news is that the pay gap in unionised workplaces is lower than the 22% in non-unionised workplaces – though at 6% there is still a lot of work to do.

The average woman earns 80p for every £1 earned by an average man – despite the Equal Pay Act coming into force in 1970

Joining a trade union adds to its strength and ensures there is increased pressure on the employers for pay transparency, clear and objective grading systems and fairer wage distribution – something which non-unionised workplaces struggle to even attempt to do.

Join the Union!
The BFAWU, like the TUC, would like to see more women joining the union and organising their workplace to improve their pay and conditions – to close the gap in pay once and for all.

* Unionised women earn on average 30% an hour more than those in non-unionised workplaces
* The gap in the private sector is 1.5 times higher (18%) than in the public sector (11%) – it’s no coincidence that there are also fewer female union members in the private sector.

Young women and part-time women workers are also less likely to be union members – which may be contributing to our own fall in female union membership. These are the workers most at risk of being low paid and, therefore, in the greatest need of trade union help.

Why don’t we have a Law?
We have had legislation around equal pay and sex discrimination for over 40 years – yet still, on a daily basis, employers are paying their female employees less than men for comparable work.

David Cameron promised to ‘close the pay gap in a generation’ but, like all of his other promises, he’s not even addressed it from its roots – never mind begun to close it. But if we had a real commitment from a government and employers alongside action from women and men at work, Chief Executive Sam Smethers from the Fawcett Society (Britain’s leading equality charity) says we can speed up the process of closing the gap in pay – if it’s just left as it is now, it will take 54 years for the gap to close which is unacceptable.

New regulations have apparently been planned going forward for businesses with more than 250 employees. This will require them to publish the differences in average pay between male and female employees, give a target to include women on the boards of the UK’s top 350 companies and cover both the public and private sector – more than 10 million workers. However, as Francis O’Grady pointed out, there is no mention of sanctions for employers who do not comply – and what about those small and medium employers where the bulk of women are employed?

In Government we trust?
Can we trust the Conservative government to follow these changes through? Remember, this is the same party that, in 2010, blocked Labour from introducing many of the measures actually contained in the proposed Equality Act. I don’t think so.

As a trade union we need to be talking more about wages and pay with each other and our employers. How can we challenge discrimination against women if we don’t know what difference in wages is actually being paid?

Is everyone paid equally in your workplace? If not this needs raising and challenging at every level. Leaving things as they are is not an option – it’s simply unfair.

Sarah Woolley
Last year: **27.3 million days** were lost due to work-related ill health or injury (15 days per case), **23.3 million days** were lost due to work-related ill health and **4.1 million days** due to workplace injury.

### Ill health

- **1.2 million people** who worked during the last year were suffering from an illness they believed was caused or made worse by their work, of which **0.5 million** were new conditions that started during the year.
- A further **0.8 million** former workers (who last worked over 12 months ago) were suffering from an illness which was caused or made worse by their past work.
- **2,538 people** died from mesothelioma in 2013 and thousands more from other work-related cancers and diseases such as COPD.

### Injuries

- **142 workers** were killed at work, a rate of **0.46 fatalities per 100,000 workers**.
- **76,000** other injuries to employees were reported under RIDDOR, a rate of **293 per 100,000 employees**.
- **611,000 injuries** occurred at work according to the Labour Force Survey, of which **152,000 led to over 7 days absence**, with rates of **2,030 and 500 per 100,000 workers**, respectively.

### Workplace risks

- ‘Dealing with difficult customers, patients, pupils etc.’ and ‘lifting or moving people or heavy loads’ were the two most common self-reported risk factors in the workplace (in a 2014 survey of workplaces).

### Fatal diseases

- Around **13,000 deaths** each year from work-related lung disease and cancer are estimated to be attributed to past exposure, primarily to chemicals and dust at work.
- This figure includes diseases for which it is possible either to count individual deaths directly, or where there is sufficient data to produce statistical estimates.
- Most of these diseases take many years to develop and so deaths occurring now are largely a result of past workplace conditions.
- Most of these deaths were work-related cancers or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).
- Current estimates (based on 2005 data) suggest there are at least **8,000 work-related cancer deaths** each year in Great Britain.
- More than half of these cancer deaths were caused by past exposures to asbestos (either mesothelioma or asbestos-related lung cancer).
- The next four biggest categories of work-related cancer were lung cancer due to silica, diesel engine exhaust and mineral oils, and breast cancer due to shift work.*

* Work-related cancer estimates are for known carcinogens (including silica, diesel engine exhaust, and mineral oils), and probable carcinogens (such as shift work) which have not yet been confirmed.
**Economic costs to Britain**

- Injuries and new cases of ill health resulting largely from current working conditions cost society an estimated £14.3 billion in 2013/14 (based on 2013 prices).

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**Fatal Diseases (cont'd)**

- In 2013 there were 2,538 deaths due to mesothelioma (a cancer of the lung lining) caused by past exposure to asbestos.
- The latest projections suggest there will be around 2,500 deaths per year for the rest of this current decade before annual numbers begin to decline.
- There were 2,215 new cases of mesothelioma assessed for Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB) in 2014 compared with 2,145 in 2013.
- Since the late 1990s, annual IIDB cases have tended to increase more rapidly than annual deaths, reflecting efforts to increase the proportion who claim over this period.
- The annual number of lung cancer deaths caused by asbestos is likely to be similar to the number of mesotheliomas.
- In 2013 there were 217 deaths where asbestosis was recorded as the underlying cause.
- There were 170 other pneumoconiosis deaths, mostly due to coal dust with a smaller number due to silica.

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**Self-reported illness**

- In 2014/15 an estimated 2.0 million people were suffering from an illness (long standing as well as new cases) they believed was caused or made worse by current or past work.
- 1.2 million worked in the last 12 months, and a further 0.8 million were former workers.
- 0.5 million were new cases amongst those working in the last 12 months.
- Around 80% of new work-related conditions were either musculoskeletal disorders or stress, depression or anxiety.

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**Enforcement in England & Wales**

- 586 cases were prosecuted by HSE.
- 70 cases were prosecuted by Local authorities.
- 72 cases prosecuted by the Procurator Fiscal in Scotland
- 12,430 enforcement notices were issued by all authorities.

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**Fatal injuries to workers**

- Over the latest 20-year time period there has been a downward trend in the rate of fatal injury, although more recently (since 2008/09) the trend is less clear.
- Of the main industrial sectors, construction, agriculture, and waste have the highest rates. These sectors accounted for 35, 33, and 5 fatal injuries to workers, respectively.

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**Workplace risks**

- Work presents both physical and psychosocial risk factors.
- A 2014 national survey of workplaces employing 5 or more employees asked about the presence of selected physical and psychosocial risk factors in the workplace.
- The most commonly cited risk factor across all workplaces was ‘Dealing with difficult customers, patients, pupils etc.’, present in about two-thirds of workplaces with 5 or more employees. While a recognised psychosocial risk, it can also present as a physical risk in terms of threats and violent incidents towards workers.
- ‘Lifting or moving people or loads’ was the second most prevalent reported risk factor in workplaces (present in just under 60% of workplaces with 5 or more employees). When this risk is not adequately controlled it leads to the potential for manual handling accidents and longer-term musculoskeletal disorders.
- Other physical risk factors present in the workplace that contribute to musculoskeletal disorders include ‘repetitive hand or arm movements’, ‘slips, trips and falls’ and ‘working in tiring or painful positions’. Each of these risks was reported to be present in around half of all workplaces with 5 or more employees.

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**Breakdowns: Countries and regions of Britain**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Rate of fatal cases of ill health per 100,000 people employed in the last 12 months, three-year average 2011/12, 2013/14 2014/15 (LFS)</th>
<th>Rate of non-fatal injury per 100,000 workers, three-year average 2013/14 to 2014/15 (LFS)</th>
<th>Number of fatal injuries to workers 2014/15p</th>
<th>Cases prosecuted 2014/15p*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>0.360</td>
<td>2.210</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>0.600</td>
<td>2.210</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorkshire and the Humber</td>
<td>0.450</td>
<td>2.420</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>0.415</td>
<td>2.340</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>0.385</td>
<td>2.420</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** Labour Force Survey (LFS) rates relate to place of residence, fatal injury data relates to place of work and prosecution data relates to the location of the court where the case was heard.

* Cases prosecuted by HSE, Local Authorities, and in Scotland, the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.
COMPARING DAYS LOST TO STRIKE vs DAYS LOST TO WORK CAUSES

However, the government feels obliged to spring into action to stop the horror of all those working days lost to strike. Let’s look at some figures to show the neoliberal fanaticism of the Tories.

The government response to employers’ poor Health & Safety systems which kill, injure and makes people ill on a massive scale (costing us billions) is to slash Health and Safety law and enforcement!

Nearly 800,000 working days were lost over strike disputes last year, a sharp increase on the previous year – although still virtually nothing, compared with the 1970s.

Working days lost to work-related/ caused injury and illness in 2013/14:
28.2 million days (27m in 2011/12)
23.5 million days (22.7m in 2011/12)
days lost to work-related illness
4.7 million days lost to work-related injury (4.3m in 2011/12).

Compare government actions

On strike (that cause 35 times fewer days lost), the government mounts an attack on trade union and workers’ right to strike and defend ourselves.

On work-caused and -related injury and illness (that cause 35 times more days lost as strikes – plus pain, suffering, heartache and poverty – almost all utterly preventable and avoidable), what does the Tory government do?

Well, for the last 5 years they cut laws, they slashed enforcement, banned inspections, priced workers out of access to justice, dumbed down guidance and lied about good Health and Safety being a ‘burden on business’ and ‘pointless red tape’.

To sum up, the government response to employers’ poor health and safety systems – killing, injuring and making people ill on a massive scale – is to cut regulation of H&S and to cut the scrutiny making sure they comply.

To a piddling 800,000 days lost by strikes (caused largely by employers’ bad behaviour), the response is to attack the hard-won human rights of workers to withdraw their labour as last resort.

And now government is threatening to use the TU Bill to attack Safety Reps directly – don’t let them do it!

Hilda Palmer
Acting Chair of National Hazards Campaign
www.hazards.org/organise/haretostay.htm

“All we seen is the government turn a blind eye to the deaths of more than 200 workers every year, while allowing them to be killed at work in the name of efficiency and saving money. It’s a disgrace!”

New campaign to tackle under-reporting of workplace accidents

All BFAWU members receive specialist personal injury legal cover (free of charge) through the union and yet many members who have been injured at work tell us they don’t want to come forward in case they are punished by management.

The union legal scheme regularly recovers tens of thousands of pounds for our members who are injured, compensation that goes directly to the member, with no legal fees, to ensure they have financial support if they’re unable to work after an accident or injury – compensation cases which force employers to stand up and take notice and to address poor health and safety where it occurs.

When under-reporting (that is, when members don’t feel comfortable reporting accidents to the union) happens, it can have negative results for the individual and their colleagues.

“All under-reporting doesn’t just mean that individual members aren’t getting the legal advice they are entitled to. It also means that negligent employers are let off the hook because we, as the union, can’t investigate (and tackle) health and safety breaches for the benefit of everyone,” said Ian Hodson, National President.

Hardly surprisingly, deaths at work are up, illness at work is up and injures at work are up.

The cost of work-related illness, injury and death on society is between £30–£60 billion a year – of this, those hurt pay 57%; we the taxpayers (who can’t hide our earnings in tax havens) pay 22%, and employers pay only 21%.

In January 2016, members will be asked to complete a short survey about the health and safety set up in their workplaces, and their views on how management responds to accidents or injuries.

Every member who responds will be entered into a draw to win £50.00 of vouchers. Note: there are no cash alternatives and the winner will be selected at random on 1st March 2016 and be notified via phone/email.

For more information about your legal services, visit:
www.bfawu.org/legal_services
CLIMATE CHANGE IS A UNION ISSUE

On the 10th October I travelled to Manchester to attend the North West ‘A Time to Act’ Climate Change Conference. A couple of videos were shown as the delegates took their seats.

The three opening speakers were John Hilary (War on Want), Kate Pickett (co-author: ‘The Spirit Level; Why Equality is Better for Everyone’) and Nick Dearden (Global Justice Now). They linked climate change to a series of problems that we are experiencing today. Refugees are being forced from Africa to Europe as their countries become too hot to work the land, through drought, floods, and very high winds.

The activist groups are now finding that their campaigns are now also linked to climate change from housing, fracking and capitalism – we need a rupture of the capitalist system to save the planet.

A third to a half of all carbon emissions come from agriculture: producing and planting seeds and transportation of the finished goods. When I first heard this I didn’t understand how plants and trees were supposed to supply our oxygen through photosynthesis.

Climate change and ill health

We need to campaign about energy policies and the alternatives in Britain as:

• 6 million households are in fuel poverty.
• 6000 people in the winter of 2014/15 died through cold-related illness.
• Many people can’t won’t pay to insulate their homes.

These issues will become more important in future years with a larger, ageing population. We need to change as well as governments who let businesses get away with legislation to cut their emissions. I feel like a bit of a hypocrite as I have my foreign holidays, I go on planes each year and I drive a car to do my job. If we had a decent, reasonably-priced transport system, I probably wouldn’t need a car (sorry can’t help with my holiday, unless I sailed there).

We cannot take climate change as a single issue anymore, but to link it to others like:-

• Climate change and ill health
• Climate change and economic migration
• Climate change and war
• Climate change and refugees
• Climate change and animal welfare
• Climate change and severe weather
• Climate change and coral bleaching

Trade unions now must realise that must tackle climate change and environmental issues, they must bring through environmental representatives to challenge businesses and their own MPs, to create one million climate jobs.

Unions can help persuade companies to invest in solar and wind power, bringing their own energy costs down. They might even make some money from the excess electricity it can produce. I have just had solar panels fitted to my roof and, this week I received a cheque for over £100 for the excess energy that has gone back into the national grid. I only have a small roof – what can it do for a large factory?

Better insulation in houses and factories also helps save money for companies (especially in office blocks) and in our homes by retaining the heat we have produced.

If anyone would like to get involved with environmental issues get in touch with your Trades Council to find out what is happening in your area.

John Fox
National Vice President

THE UNION EFFECT

The most effective tool that we have in ensuring good Health and Safety at work is trade unions, because organised workplaces are safer workplaces. That is one of the main reasons that people join and stay in a union. When asked, 70% of new trade union members considered health and safety a ‘very important’ union issue – more even than for pay.

We know that the 150,000 trade union safety representatives make a difference because trade union involvement:

• Helps reduce injuries at work.
• Leads to reductions the levels of ill-health caused by work.
• Encourages greater reporting of injuries and near-misses.
• Makes workers more confident.
• Helps develop a more positive safety culture in the organisation.
• Saves the economy many millions.

Help us to gather evidence

The TUC are looking to build a body of evidence to show the effect Unions have on Health and Safety.

Please request the form above from GM hazards and give your description of how union involvement has helped reduce injuries or ill-health.

mail: info@hazardscampaign.org
When completed, return it to:
mail: healthandsafety@tuc.org.uk
YoungMinds is the UK’s leading charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people.

Mental ill-health is far more common than people realise, with nearly 1 million children and young people suffering from severe depression, 300,000 young people in Britain have an anxiety disorder and nearly 1 in 10 have self-harmed. With cuts to public services and lack of readily available help from other sources, support for this vulnerable section of society is becoming increasingly difficult to access.

That’s where YoungMinds can help.

Making Young Voices Heard
Children and young people with mental health problems are at the heart of everything YoungMinds does. YoungMinds works with young people to help get their voices heard and help them to influence and inform change in mental health services, the NHS and in national and local policy.

YoungMinds Vs, their most recent youth engagement campaign, is building a mass movement of young people fighting the pressures that contribute to their poor mental health. This puts them at the heart of decision making about their own care, their services and mental health policy. After consulting with over 5,000 young people, YoungMinds were told the following five issues were the ones that mattered most to them: lack of access to help, sexual pressure, bullying, school stress, and unemployment.

Over 50,000 people raised their voices in 2014/15 and joined YoungMinds in raising awareness and campaigning at a local and national level to improve young people’s mental health.

Helping Young People Online
The stigma associated with mental health and lack of readily available help means that the internet is where young people often turn for advice and support. The YoungMinds website is a vital resource of trusted information about mental health available to anyone, anywhere.

Launched by YoungMinds in 2014, HeadMeds is a unique website that gives young people much needed straight talk on mental health medication. It includes information about potential side effects and when they should go and get help. It also answers difficult questions around the medication that they might feel uncomfortable asking their GP and real life stories provide reassurance during a time that is often confusing and frightening.

Helping Families
It’s not just young people YoungMinds looks to engage with, it’s the adults that care for them too. Young people tell the charity that they need the adults responsible for their care to understand how they might be feeling, be able to spot problems as soon as they are at risk, and know how to help them when they are suffering.

Through the Parents’ Helpline YoungMinds offers free and confidential online and telephone support, including information and advice, to any adult worried about the emotional problems, behaviour or mental health of a child or young person up to the age of 25. In the last year alone the service has helped over 10,000 families in crisis, with 1 in 7 parents saying the helpline was a lifesafer.

What you can do to help
YoungMinds relies on the generous individuals and companies who support their vital work. One-off donations, regular giving or fundraising, all help to improve the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people in the UK.

- £5 will provide information packs for schools about mental health.
- £10 helps to develop vital online resources on issues such as self-harm and eating disorders and keep them up-to-date.
- £30 will provide on the spot support to a distressed parent.
- £50 will provide training for a group of young people so that their voices are heard in the media.

YoungMinds is a small organisation trying to make a big difference, anything you can do will help them to continue their free and confidential Parents Helpline, campaigning, projects with young people and work in schools.

Get in contact by emailing: fundraising@youngminds.org.uk
call: 0207 089 5050.
visit: www.youngminds.org.uk
Parents Helpline: 0808 802 5544
Night Fever
SUCCESSFUL NIGHT ORGANISING by the BFAWU organising team at Wealmoor Ltd (Atherstone On Stour, Stratford Upon Avon, Warwickshire)

“Alone we can do so little – together we can do so much.”

I would like to express my appreciation for all the hard work put in by the team and especially Dave Dash for leading the campaign.

George Atwall
Region 3 Regional Officer

(Picture shows the intrepid team: George Atwall, Frank Loveday, Dave Dash and Lukasz Bemka)

Attack on Terms and Conditions
MASSIVE FOOD PRODUCER TMI Foods in Northampton decided to drastically cut employees T&Cs.

Flat overtime and weekend rates, a 40 hour a week (when business needs dictate) over 7 days working week, reduction of sick pay and inclusion of Bank Holidays into annual leave entitlement are fundamental changes to our contracts of employment. Membership is growing and our members have decided to fight for their rights.

This is only one example of new tactics to introduce new Living Wage in April. Companies are trying to minimise the impact by reducing employees' benefits and using a cheaper workforce to compensate directors' profits and bonuses.

Lukasz Bemka

DUC in ALTUM Farewell To Summer
ON SATURDAY, 26TH OF SEPTEMBER www.polska-uk.com, BFAWU and Learning Services had an opportunity to approach the Polish community in Coventry. Organised by the Family Support Centre, the DUC in ALTUM event appeared to be very successful.

Opened by Lord Mayor of Coventry Michael Hammond and followed by live bands, the Polish festival gave us a chance to create new contacts, speak to families and to enjoy beautiful food.

Two Labour Coventry Councillors (Deputy Lord Mayor Lindsley Harvard and Councillor George Arthur Duggins) expressed their support to our community type of approach.

www.polska-uk.com would like to thank Region 3 Officials: George Atwall, John Higgins, Łukasz Bemka and Karen Plasom from ULS for support on the day.

Lukasz Bemka

Dunkleys LTD
BFAWU STARTED A NEW CAMPAIGN in Good Food Co. Dunkleys Ltd. Employees approached us at the gate. The need and hunger for union presence on site were unbelievable.

A meeting held on Saturday, 17th October was very successful and, as a result, a list of internal issues was created – problems from H&S violations through discrimination to issues with wages and introduction of zero hours contracts to all new employees.

The Region 3 campaign (supported by www.polska-uk.com, George Atwall and Haroon Rashid) may be yet another successful one with the vision to create an effective branch on a greenfield site – with no previous experience or knowledge of the union movement.

Lukasz Bemka
Time to celebrate

Back in May this year English and Maths classes were offered at Pennine in Sheffield. The response was phenomenal and a number of people expressed an interest. Time was limited as the programme ended on the 31st of July which is the end of the academic year and funding.

Enthusiasm for Learning was infectious and the dedication was inspiring. One lady attended class each evening before her night shift just to practice. The tutor, Terry, knew how to get the best out of the learners and this is proven with the achievements.

After people had put in so much hard work to achieve their qualification we planned a day to celebrate the success of everyone that participated. In October, Ian Hodson (BFAWU National President) came to Pennine to present certificates to learners who had successfully completed various levels in Maths and English.

This is not the end of learning here at Pennine, soon we will be registering for adult apprenticeships – with full backing from the company.

I would like to thank the learners, the ULRs, Debbie Loy, (HR at Pennine and Interserve) – without everyone’s input we wouldn’t have had anything to celebrate.

Lisa Greenfield

Joyce was a member of Lyons, Carlton (Branch 582) where she was a shop steward in the restaurant for a number of years. When I visited Joyce she had fallen a few days earlier and her face was badly bruised so she did not want a photo taken. However she did give me her most recent photo. Joyce is 90 very soon.

On behalf of the BFAWU and myself, I want to wish Joyce a very happy birthday – and a speedy recovery after her fall.

Sam Vickers

Recently we have formally presented 6 retired members from Manor Bakeries Branch 582 their 40 year badges.

We hoped to do a group presentation at the bakery on Tuesday 20th October. On this occasion, however, only two members were able to attend – Mrs K Hatfield and Mrs D Parker (shown in the photo).

I had the pleasure of presenting them with their badges and certificates. The other members that became free card members were:

- J Baker
- J Beaumont
- J Woofingdon

Pauline McCarthy
Branch 582, Manor Carlton

John, Darren Millar (her manager) and myself awarding Janice her free membership card, badge and cheque – which she was very happy to receive!

David ‘Sid’ Sorsby (Two Sisters Group)
JOIN THE BAKERS, FOOD AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION

Application forms from any Shop Steward or, to find out more, complete the form below.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

BAKERS, FOOD & ALLIED WORKERS UNION

FREEPOST RTKG-RJRE-CJAT

Stanborough House

Great North Road

WELWYN GARDEN CITY

AL8 7BR

I would like to know more about the benefits of belonging to the Union:

Name (Block letters)

Address

Contact Phone

Email address

Where employed at present

Occupation

Signature

Date

Please complete details above and hand to your local representative, Branch Official, Regional Office (for addresses see above) or send to Head Office at the FREEPOST address shown.