Welcome To The First Issue of The Activist

Welcome to the first issue of our union newsbrief designed specifically for you and all the other GMB reps, activists and contacts in the Yorkshire and North Derbyshire region. I hope you find it informative and useful and that its contents help you in the work you do on a daily basis for GMB members.

GMB activists are the lifeblood of our union and for most members you will be the face of the GMB and the ‘go to person’ with work related problems - big and small. I want you to share with us - through ‘The Activist’ - news about what’s going on in your workplace. Let us have details of the campaigns you are running, the successes you have achieved, the deals you have negotiated and the battles you have won with your members. Send us your photos so we can spread the word about all the great work GMB reps do across the region.

Together lets make our union stronger.

Neil Derrick - Regional Secretary

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Remembering The Dead

On the 28th April 2016, Workers’ Memorial Day, GMB offices across the region will fall silent at 10.00am as a mark of respect to lost and injured workers.

The ringing of a memorial bell, situated at each of our offices, will signal the start of a minutes silence in remembrance of those who have been hurt or lost their lives during the course of their employment.

All GMB members are welcome to join us. For further details contact Colin Kirkham on 0345 337 7777.
The Activist

GMB’s Gary Baker with campaigners in Calderdale

We ♥ UNIONS

The 8-14 February 2016 was the Heartunions week of action which celebrated the great work done by union reps and members in our workplaces and in society. We're proud of our unions and reject the Government’s attempts to damage them with the Trade Union Bill. In the face of this politically motivated onslaught the TUC organised the week’s events to remind us why our unions are important and how this legislation will damage society. GMB staff and activists gave out leaflets across the region and asked members of the public to sign a petition protesting at the Government’s oppressive actions in trying to force the bill through parliament.

Regional Secretary Neil Derrick said: “The Trade Union Bill is an attack on the GMB’s ability to campaign, union democracy and the Labour Party.”

Don’t Lose Your Voice At Work!

The Trade Union Bill And How It Will Impact On GMB Members Working In The Public Sector

When the Government planned Trade Union Bill becomes law this summer we will see one of the biggest attacks on the trade union movement in decades which will undo years of hard fought for and hard won rights.

The implementation of the Trade Union Bill will make it unlawful for GMB members working in the public sector to have their union contributions deducted from their pay (check-off).

The Government claim that this is to reduce costs, however, other deductions such as council tax, private health care and credit unions will not be affected.

Other areas facing the axe include trade union facility time for GMB workplace representatives and the tightening up of laws on industrial action.

The Trade Union Bill has clearly been designed to make it harder for individuals to access union representation in the workplace and is a deliberate attempt to undermine trade unions.

We are encouraging all public sector workers who pay union contributions from their wages to transfer to direct debit before this draconian Bill becomes law.

You can call our dedicated switch-over number on 0345 337 7777 or visit www.gmb.org.uk (click ‘Move Your GMB Subs to Direct Debit’ link).

Have we got your correct contact details?
Contact GMB to update your GMB profile

THE ACTIVIST
GMB - Grove Hall - 60 College Grove Road - Wakefield - WF1 3RN
0345 337 7777  www.gmbyorkshire.org.uk
New GMB Branch Gets The Thumbs Up

The 1st February 2016 was certainly a day for celebration for Yorkshire Ambulance Service members when they formed their new branch.

Ten years ago GMB were derecognised from what was then West Yorkshire Metropolitan Ambulance Service. For all those years only one union was recognised so it was fantastic when in July 2015, the GMB was once again recognised.

Pauline Kiely was GMB representative at the time but had to step down when we lost recognition. The great news is she’s now back on board as a workplace rep.

Speaking to The Activist NHS officer Stacey Booth, said: “Since July we have been working hard to recruit more representatives and open a branch. This was achieved at the end of 2015. All representatives have completed their initial support training and an inaugural branch meeting was held on the 1st February.

Pauline and I are thrilled to be welcoming our new team on board and look forward to working together to provide advice, representation and guidance to our members.”

Did you know?

GMB has its origins in the Gas Workers and General Union which was formed in 1889 by Will Thorne. Following the success of the union’s first battle in the campaign on working hours, workers flocked to join the new union and by 1911 its members numbered 77,000.

Save our Steel: steel workers from around the European Parliament in Brussels

To the sound of whistles, horns and bike bells, a sea of thousands of luminous yellows, reds, greens and blues weaved through the streets of Brussels. The 5,000 marchers, many in their high-visibility jackets and helmets, had come from virtually every corner of Europe with a single goal: to save the steel industry.

The GMB says: “The Government must act to save the UK steel industry as a further 100 jobs are under threat in Sheffield. The lack of action from the EU Commission to stop the dumping of Chinese steel is intolerable.”

Ian Kemp, GMB rep from Tata Steel, said: “I am incensed that the lack of action by the Government and the lack of a coherent policy for manufacturing is once again costing jobs in South Yorkshire.”

Join the Labour Party

The GMB believe that with the right policies based on values held by GMB members, the Labour Party is the best chance for a fairer deal for GMB members.

As a GMB member you get a special Labour Party membership rate of only £1.96 a month.

Contact Steve Jennings for further details: Email steve.jennings@gmb.org.uk
GMB’s Asbestos Register

The HSE estimate there may be an increase in the number of people who have come into contact with asbestos during their working lives for at least the next 20 to 30 years.

Although registering with the GMB can’t prevent the onset of conditions to any individual who falls ill due to working in an environment that contains asbestos, what it can do is document the historical events to assist the individual or their family if they need to proceed with a claim. Asbestos dust is responsible for more deaths than any other work related cause. Every year nearly 4,000 people die as a result of exposure to asbestos fibres and this death toll is expected to continue.

Asbestos was once described as a ‘miracle mineral.’ It was cheap, easy to use and was used in almost every industry from shipping to power stations, factories, hospitals, schools and even our homes. It was used in boilers, brake linings and for many other industrial and domestic purposes. Most skilled and unskilled workers in the thermal insulation and shipbuilding sector and the trades involved in construction were also put at risk.

Unionline - Our solicitors have an experienced team of qualified specialist lawyers dedicated to handling these claims. Claims for compensation can be brought against employers or occupiers of buildings many years after the exposure. However, the passage of time can make it very difficult to prove who was responsible for the exposure. If you have been diagnosed with an asbestos related illness such as asbestosis, pleural thickening, asbestos related lung cancer or mesothelioma, one of their experienced team of qualified specialist lawyers will be able to advise you further.

THOSE ALSO AT RISK INCLUDE:

- Workers involved in the maintenance of premises or repair of installations where asbestos was present.
- Family members at risk from asbestos fibres that were carried home on work clothes.
- People living nearby to premises where asbestos was processed or stored if it was not properly contained.

If you think you have come into contact with Asbestos complete an Asbestos Questionnaire. Contact GMB on 0345 337 7777 or email lesley.o’mara@gmb.org.uk for further details.

18 Months And Still Fighting On At Green Co

Jim Rodgers and Gordon Parkes were GMB reps sacked for standing up for a fair deal, a living wage, health & safety and to put an end to the Green Co bullying.

It all started in July 2014 when the entire management team at Green Co was suspended, and later sacked, for challenging the charity Chair who owns the company (Salvaire) over financial matters and control. That was just the beginning and the bullying spread to the workforce who took action over the on-going bullying, health and safety issues and pay.

Seven employees have been sacked and others bullied out of their jobs. The living wage is no more and yet this company make a small fortune on this publically funded contract.

February 2016 Latest Inflation (RPI)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Increase from last month</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headline Inflation Rate (RPI All items)</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underlying Inflation Rate (RPIX excl mortgages)</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Prices Index (CPI)</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
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</table>
GMB Branch Weekend Is A Huge Success

Another fantastic event was held in the region when GMB activists and members came together for the 2016 Branch Weekend in Garforth, Leeds. The theme of this year’s event was ‘How Do We Beat The Trade Union Bill?’ and the scene was set with a presentation from the Head of Employment Law at Pattinson & Brewer, Binder Bansel, on what the Trade Union Bill meant for us.

Workshops were held during the day and activists took the opportunity to feed-back on how they thought we should work together to oppose the Trade Union Bill. A Branch Awards Ceremony took place in the evening with a number of branches honoured for the work they have done on behalf of GMB and its members during 2015. Sunday morning saw a debate on the EU followed by a Q&A.

CV Writing Support for GMB Members Facing Redundancy

GMB members who are facing redundancy following Sheffield City Council’s decision to close Dalewood View Nursing Home in Sheffield, took part in a one day CV writing workshop with Learning for Work project worker, Sarah Barnes.

Many of the members had worked at the home for years and did not have an up to date CV. The content of the workshop was designed to help build confidence in their abilities and to help members recognise their transferable skills. Two members signed up to do a fully funded Level 2 vocational distance learning course to enhance their future employment prospects even further.

Violence in Schools

GMB, the union for school support staff, commented on a new survey showing that more than two-fifths (42.8%) of education workers have had to deal with violent pupils in the last year, while others have faced insults, threats, bullying and harassment.

GMB calls for zero tolerance of violence against staff in schools and for adequate safeguards to protect members from attacks. It is unacceptable for school staff to be kicked, punched, spat on or to have school equipment and even furniture thrown at them. Kath Robinson, GMB National Schools rep said: “GMB is committed to raising awareness of this issue. It is unacceptable for school staff to be treated in this way and being attacked either verbally or physically is not part of the job.”

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GMB Yorkshire and North Derbyshire Region

Have you got an article for The Activist?
Email it to: steve.jennings@gmb.org.uk
USE THE ACTIVIST TO SIGN UP A FRIEND OR COLLEAGUE

It can be as simple as a new manager, or a new way of working that causes you a problem at work. Guard against that day by joining GMB now. GMB membership covers you wherever you work. Only GMB members get GMB help.

Contributions: £2.90 if you work more than 20 hours per week and £1.70 if you work 20 hours or less per week. If you work 10 hours or less per week you can opt to pay the promotional rate of £1.00 (this rate excludes cash benefits). The apprentice rate is 50p per week. The working student rate is £1.00 per week and the non-working student rate is £1.00 per month (via Direct Debit only).

Join now at www.gmb.org.uk/join or fill in the form below then hand the form to your local GMB representative, or simply write FREEPOST GMB WAKEFIELD on an envelope—you don’t need a stamp or any other address details.

GMB membership application form

Please fill in the form below and send to: GMB Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region, Grove Hall, 60 College Grove Road, WAKEFIELD WF1 3RN

1 TELL US ABOUT YOU

Surname
First name
Home address
Postcode
Home phone number
Mobile number
Email
National insurance number
Date of birth
We ask for your ethnic origins as part of our equal opportunities policy of improving services to all members
Bangladeshi  Black African  Black Caribbean  Black British  Chinese  Indian  Irish  Pakistani  White  Other:

I agree to abide by GMB rules
Signed

2 TELL US ABOUT YOUR JOB

Employer
Address where you work
Postcode
How many hours a week do you work?
Pay number
Work phone number
Pay date

3 AUTHORISATION OF DEDUCTION OF YOUR UNION CONTRIBUTIONS FROM YOUR PAY

Section 68, Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidated) Act 1992 as amended

I authorise my employer to deduct from my pay each week/month the sum of
£
or other amounts as may be fixed by GMB from time to time.

Signed
Date

4 INSTRUCTION TO YOUR BANK OR BUILDING SOCIETY TO PAY BY DIRECT DEBIT

Service User Number 974330

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society: Please pay GMB Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with GMB and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signed
Date

For GMB official use only. This is not part of the instruction to your Bank/Building Society. If your A/C number is not available fill in your address below:

Bank/Building Society account number
Bank/Building Society sort code
Bank/Building Society account holder(s)

Banks or Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account.

Reference number (GMB use only)