

# The Activist

GMB News From Around The Region



Neil Derrick leads the proceedings at GMB Wakefield

Stephanie Peacock & Tracy Brabin

## INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' MEMORIAL DAY

On the 28<sup>th</sup> April 2017, GMB offices across the region stopped work at 10.00am so that staff and activists could pay their respects to lost and injured workers. The ringing of a memorial bell, situated at each of GMB's offices, signalled the start of a minute's silence.

At GMB's office in Wakefield, Neil Derrick, Regional Secretary, led the proceedings and the memorial bell was rung three times by Stephanie Peacock, Labour's candidate for Barnsley East and Tracy Brabin, Labour's candidate for Batley & Spen.

Tracy Brabin paid tribute to GMB and the work we do in promoting health and safety and protecting GMB members in the workplace through our network of amazing health and safety reps.

International Workers' Memorial Day (WMD) is a day when workers around the world stop to remember those workers killed, disabled, injured or made unwell by their job. It is a day to remember the dead and to fight for the living and a day to acknowledge the families and friends of those who have lost their lives through the effects of work.

Speaking to The Activist Neil Derrick, GMB Regional Secretary, said: "GMB will never stop campaigning to improve health and safety in the workplace. It is disgraceful that in the 21st Century people set off for work but don't return home at night because they have been injured or killed as a result of negligent employers and bad employment practices."

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**REMEMBER THE DEAD  
FIGHT FOR THE LIVING  
ONE DEATH IS TOO MANY**



**NO ONE SHOULD BE  
HIDDEN  
FROM  
HEALTH & SAFETY  
AT WORK**



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The cost of health and safety failures is estimated at £20 billion per year; the cost of long term illnesses doubles this to £40 billion. The cost of poor mental health in the UK is estimated at £105 billion per year. That's £145 billion each and every year.

- ◆ One person dies from occupational cancer every hour
- ◆ Two people every day lose a limb or an eye in workplace accidents

**Millions more are hurt and made ill by work!**

## AROUND THE REGION ON WMD 2017



Health and Safety rep Dan Preston (right) from North Derbyshire Branch, organised an event in conjunction with other health and safety colleagues to mark Workers' Memorial Day at Derbyshire County Council. A special flag was flown above County Hall for the day and talks were given by Dan and retired member Maurice Bloom (left) who gave an overview of the changes that have taken place in health and safety in the workplace over the last 60 years. David McGregor from Derbyshire Asbestos Support Team also spoke about the dangers of asbestos and the devastating impact it has on lives.

Councillor Andy Botham, Cabinet Member for Council Services, committed the Authority to safe working practices and ensuring that all employees work in a safe and healthy environment with the correct protective clothing and equipment.

Ailsa Cooling, North Derbyshire Branch Secretary, said: **"The event was a successful start to raising awareness of the importance of health and safety. Planning has already started for next year's event when we hope to welcome even more people to share as widely as possible the message that health and safety matters."**



**A minute's silence** was held outside GMB's York office, followed by a speech from Rachael Maskell, Labour's candidate for York. Rachael spoke of all those who had died in workplace incidents across the country, including Jo Cox who was murdered whilst undertaking her role as MP for Batley & Spen and also PC Keith Palmer, murdered whilst carrying out his duties protecting those in Parliament.

GMB health and safety representatives across our region work tirelessly every day to make workplaces safer for our members; made safer by ensuring that day to day working practices and activities are risk assessed and monitored.

**If you would like to become a health and safety rep contact your local GMB office for further details.**

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GMB

YOUR HEALTH  
YOUR SAFETY

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NO ONE SHOULD BE HIDDEN FROM  
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GMB Young Members Get Active

## SIGN UP, SPEAK UP AND GET CAMPAIGNING

Although the main campaign for GMB young members is Mental Health Awareness, they'll be taking sometime out to focus on the general election campaign up until the 8 June.

**Sign Up To Vote:** We need to encourage as many people as possible to register to vote by **22 May** so they can take part in the general election on 8 June. Talk about it on your social media and with everyone you know. There are still many young people (and older ones too) who aren't registered to vote. We want to change this by informing young people about why it's important for them to register.

**Speak Up For Labour:** We need your help! Can you take a few minutes to film yourself talking about why you're voting Labour? We would like young people to email us with their 30 second video clip explaining why it's important to vote and why they're voting Labour. We would especially like members to film themselves in the workplace raising work related issues. Don't want to speak in front of a camera? Take a photo and let us know in writing instead!

**Please email these to Rachel.harrison@gmb.org.uk by Friday 19 May.**

**Labour Campaign Day:** We are urging as many young members (and older GMB activists) to come together on Saturday 27 May in Dewsbury/Batley to campaign for a Labour win at the general election. It will be a day of collective campaigning and fun!

Register your interest to get involved by emailing: [Rachel.harrison@gmb.org.uk](mailto:Rachel.harrison@gmb.org.uk) or [Steve.jennings@gmb.org.uk](mailto:Steve.jennings@gmb.org.uk) or [Trudy.frampton@gmb.org.uk](mailto:Trudy.frampton@gmb.org.uk) or ring GMB on **0345 337 7777** and ask to be allocated to a campaign team in your area.

## DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL INTRODUCES GUARANTEED MINIMUM HOURS' CONTRACTS

Derbyshire County Council has reviewed the contractual arrangements for its relief employees and from the 1 April this year a new framework was put in place offering relief workers a Guaranteed Minimum Contract (GMC).

GMB reps have been involved in negotiations with the Authority since April 2016 and with 1178 relief contract holders it was always going to be a huge task to implement the new contracts. The hours offered to each relief worker has been based on the average number of hours worked over a three year reference period and each worker has been offered 70% of the hours worked as guaranteed employment, the hours to be worked flexibly over the year as and when business needs arise.

The contract places an obligation on the Authority to employ GMC contract holders for the hours offered as well as placing an obligation on the employee to accept the hours that they have accepted in their new contract. Contractual hours will be reviewed annually and may change depending on the number of hours actually worked. Contracts will be offered annually to all qualifying relief contract holders who can choose on a yearly basis whether or not they wish to accept a GMC. Anyone not accepting a GMC can remain as a true relief employee.

Ailsa Cooling North Derbyshire Branch Secretary, said: **"Although the take up of the GMC has been low, about 10%, it is still a positive step forward and whilst Derbyshire County Council has never had what could be called true zero hours' contracts, relief workers are free to decline work whenever they wish without penalty. It is nevertheless a huge positive that the Authority has undertaken to introduce Guaranteed Minimum Contracts and offer them to so many relief employees."**



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**NESTLÉ TO AXE NEARLY 300 JOBS**  
 Nestlé has announced proposals to consult on 298 redundancies which will affect 143 workers at its York based factory and 15 at the Halifax site, which has sent shockwaves around Nestlé factories across the UK. **"These proposals are another attack on the already declining employee numbers within Nestlé which started life as Rowntree & Co and was once a thriving employer within the York community. GMB will continue to fight on behalf of its members,"** said GMB organiser, Lynn Brook.

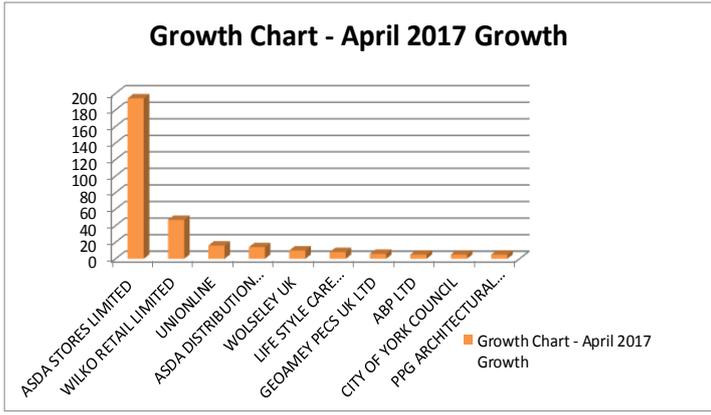
The plight of Nestlé has been constantly in the news since the announcement and has received great support from Rachael Maskell, Labour candidate for York, who raised it at Prime Minister's Question Time. Neil Derrick, GMB Regional Secretary, appeared on the Sunday Politics show and also commented on the decline of companies such as Nestlé since the Brexit announcement. The company are proposing to send production of it's iconic Blue Riband brand to Poland.



**GMB DELIVERS NEW ACTION AGAINST 'GIG ECONOMY' EMPLOYMENT STATUS**  
 Last year, UnionLine (GMB's law firm) reported that an Employment Tribunal had ruled in favour of a claim brought by GMB against Uber who were wrong to label workers as 'self-employed'. This is another case in a long line of legal battles around bogus self-employment. GMB has been actively recruiting drivers at UK Express and DX who deliver for some of the world's largest companies, in this case Amazon. The drivers delivering for Amazon, like Uber drivers, cannot be classed as anything other than employed when you look at the law. These drivers deserve employment rights that are enjoyed by the majority, including the right to be paid a minimum wage and holiday pay. These companies are trying to duck their obligations and responsibilities by making its workforce 'self-employed'.

Amazon enforces control on drivers, sanctions them for 'poor performance' and requires them to pay for van hire. The online retailer also requires drivers to be available for 15 days per month and money is deducted from a driver's pay if they cannot work. Drivers classified as workers rather than self-employed would be entitled to 5.6 weeks paid annual leave per year, the National Minimum Wage, paid rest breaks and whistle-blower protection. Our information shows that Amazon use several contractors for delivery, not only UK Express. These contractors then employ drivers on a self-employed basis, often on unfair terms where drivers should, in our view, have worker status.

**If you know of a 'self-employed' driver in this position then please encourage them to join GMB. For further information on our campaign to organise drivers please contact Paul Wade on 0345 337 7777 or email: paul.wade@gmb.org.uk**



**Latest Inflation - March 2017**  
 Consumer Prices Index (CPI) **2.3%**  
 Headline Inflation Rate (RPI All items) **3.1%**

 @GMBCampaigns  
 GMB Yorkshire and North Derbyshire Region



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Judith Hodgkinson, Neil Derrick & Andy Irving

## REC ON THE ROAD

On Wednesday 12th April, GMB's Regional Executive Committee (REC) held its monthly meeting at Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust, hosted by Sheffield Health Branch and the Trust board. The REC met with Steven Ned, Human Resources Director at the Trust, who spoke about the challenges facing the NHS because of government cuts in funding and the difficulties this caused in managing the service.

The REC also took the opportunity to meet with GMB reps and members at the Trust and were shown around a new build which is due to open later in the year encompassing two brand new state of the art wards. The region, along with BASF Branch and Sheffield Health Branch, donated two Xbox consoles to the Trust for its adolescent rooms, which were gratefully received by GMB member Judith Hodgkinson who leads the new build team.



## HELPING CHILDREN SMILE

GMB is proud to support our foster carers and the children they care for. During the Easter break GMB donated much needed funds to foster carers in Kirklees to help them host a variety of activities for children during the school break. The children attended arts and craft workshops, had fun on an obstacle courses and had a feast with pizza making.



## COMEDIAN EDDIE IZZARD IN LINE-UP FOR JO COX MEMORIAL RUN

Comic genius and accomplished marathon runner Eddie Izzard is lined-up to take part in the **#RunForJo** when it takes place on Sunday 25 June 2017 at Birstall's Oakwell Hall & Country Park in memory of Jo Cox, MP. Eddie, pictured above with Kim Leadbeater (Jo's sister), took the opportunity to show his support for the **#RunForJo** during a recent visit to Batley and is encouraging as many people as possible to sign-up for the event. It is hoped that more than 1,000 walkers/runners will take part in either a 2.5k fun-run or a 6.5k cross-country challenge.

Kim, said: **"Events like this were what Jo was all about - our community coming together with shared passions, whether that be music, food, sport or just a good old fashioned Yorkshire chat. I'll be running for Jo."**

So why not join **TeamGMB** and get signed up for the run. Visit: <https://racebest.com/races/runforjo-6k>  
<https://racebest.com/races/runforjo-fun-run>

## THE GREAT GET TOGETHER

Eddie Izzard is also backing **The Great Get Together**, a nationwide celebration inspired by Jo Cox and set to take place over the weekend of 16 to 18 June 2017. The much-loved star of stage and screen is encouraging people to take part by throwing street parties, picnics and community events in Jo's honour. To find out more visit:

<https://greatgettogether.org/>

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