PROUD PAST, BRIGHT FUTURE: DURHAM MINERS’ GALA

Once again activists from around the region made the journey to the historical town of Durham to join in the celebrations for the 133rd Durham Miners’ Gala. The gala is the largest annual gathering of trade unionists in Europe with a reported attendance of 200,000 this year.

It is held on the second Saturday of July and people from all over the UK descend on Durham to take part. The gala dates back to 1871 when Durham Miners’ Association organised the first one in Wharton Park, Durham.

Colourful trade union banners and brass bands were paraded through the streets in a procession towards the Old Racecourse before stopping briefly at the County Hotel to be greeted by invited dignitaries and guest speakers from the hotel balcony.

One of those guest speakers was Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn, who addressed the mammoth rally at the Old Racecourse. He called for a general election, demanded an end to the public sector pay cap and a public inquiry into the Grenfell fire. He went on to describe the event as ‘Europe’s biggest demonstration of working class culture’.

Speaking to The Activist, GMB Regional Secretary, Neil Derrick, said: “The gala is a reminder of our past struggles for justice, equality and fairness and it is as important today as it was all those years ago. The number of young people who turned out just demonstrates the demand for change and the power of collectivism.”

“All in all everyone had a fantastic day and it was a real show of unity.”
UK WORKERS ARE CHEATED OUT OF AT LEAST £1.5BN A YEAR IN HOLIDAY PAY

Employers are cheating British workers out of at least £1.5bn a year in holiday pay to which they are legally entitled, a study has found. One in 20 workers report not being given statutory holiday pay, while one in 12 workers do not receive a payslip as required by law. A further £1.2bn of wages owed for hours worked are unpaid each year, according to a research group at Middlesex University business school in a report called Unpaid Britain.

"We’ve focused on the so-called gig economy and zero-hours contracts, but the much more pervasive practices of employers who simply pocket workers’ wages have continued largely unremarked," Nick Clark, lead researcher, said.

The Unpaid Britain group suggested that two types of cheating were prevalent. Where workers have variable hours and no payslips, employers are able to make a significant financial gain by cheating them a little and often, and it is hard for workers to keep track of hours worked or to prove what they are owed.

A separate pattern involved bosses deferring pay on the grounds that their business was struggling and then repeatedly going into administration before workers had been paid. The researchers found many phoenix businesses being wound up with debts owed to workers and HMRC but then reappearing with the same or related directors and premises under a different name.

The report also highlights the barriers, such as tribunal and court fees, cuts in legal aid, and protection offered to employers by limited liability, that very often prevent workers recovering unpaid wages. The number of individual workers taking employers to tribunal has fallen by 67% since the government introduced fees in 2013. Even when workers win at tribunal, they may still have to pay the costs of court enforcement orders and bailiffs where employers fail to pay up.

EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS COULD BE UNDER THREAT UPON LEAVING THE EU

Working time regulations that have seen hours for most workers limited to 48 hours per week over the past couple of decades, could be subject to amendment.

The Working Time Directive also makes time off a legal requirement, so employers have to give staff 48 hours off in every fortnight and rest time of at least 11 consecutive hours. Maternity, equality and parental leave rights are all underwritten in EU law.

UK laws banning discrimination on the grounds of age, religion or sexual orientation come directly from the EU’s Equal Treatment Directive. EU laws have also made it easier for people claiming discrimination to get justice, by placing the burden of proof in discrimination cases on the alleged perpetrator rather than the alleged victim. Under EU law there is no limit on the amount of compensation an employer can be made to pay in discrimination cases.

The agency workers’ rules that put temporary workers on a par with directly employed ‘permanent’ staff are also underpinned by EU law.

In the area of health and safety, the TUC says 41 of the 65 new health and safety regulations introduced in the UK between 1997 and 2009 came from EU laws.

We will keep you updated on developments.

Latest Inflation
Consumer Prices Index (CPI) 2.9%
Headline Inflation Rate (RPI All items) 3.7%
GMB Yorkshire and North Derbyshire Region
@GMBCampaigns
HEALTH & SAFETY INSPECTION WEEK

The theme for this year’s Health & Safety Inspection Week was pregnant workers and GMB’s West Yorkshire Police Support Staff Branch took the opportunity to undertake extensive work to establish if their organisation’s current ‘New and Expectant Mothers Policy’ was fit for purpose in the modern workplace. The Policy was found to be very comprehensive in nature and sets out clearly in a flow chart format the activities that must be completed by managers and supervisors to protect staff when the organisation is informed that a member of staff is pregnant.

GMB Safety Representative, Martin Jordan, approached every district and department in the West Yorkshire Police area four weeks before the Inspection Week and served the head of each district and department with a Regulation 7 letter requesting release of specific documents for examination by the GMB. These documents were all anonymised to protect the individual. Most districts and departments engaged with Martin and complied with the GMB Regulation 7 request.

Martin said: “On the whole it was found that those that did respond had good quality risk assessments with regular reviews of individuals in place. There were sensible and clear control measures put in place by managers that would protect new and expectant mothers in the workplace.”

“The exercise proved beneficial in raising awareness of West Yorkshire Police’s policy amongst managers and supervisors and ensured that the needs of our members were being addressed in a professional and consistent way with the safety of our members and all other staff in mind. Feedback from this exercise will be delivered to the next Police Chief Officer Team Force Health and Safety Committee meeting in August 2017.”

POLITICS OF HOPE – LABOUR’S MANIFESTO WORKSHOP

In view of the dramatic developments in politics following on from the general election result in June, it is more important than ever that we maintain the momentum which has gathered behind Labour’s programme of policies and leadership.

It was clear during the election that Labour’s policy pledges which were contained in the ‘manifesto’ launched during the campaign caught public imagination.

We want to ensure that our reps and members both fully understand what Labour’s programme for government is and how politics in this country could be if we had a Labour government.

We will therefore, be holding the first in a series of manifesto workshops on:

**Saturday, 5th August 2017 at GMB, Grove Hall, 60 College Grove Road, Wakefield, WF1 3RN between 10.00am and 2.00pm.**

This will be an interesting and interactive workshop led by Neil Derrick, Colin Burgon and joined by Tracy Brabin MP for Batley & Spen, where we will look into what Labour has pledged to deliver in government and how this will impact on GMB membership and the country as a whole.

If there is demand we will run these workshops over the coming weeks and months to ensure that we spread the message as far as possible, and that we are ready should a further general election be called.

If you would like to attend please email Maria Ford on: maria.ford@gmb.org.uk or contact her on 0345 337 7777 by Wednesday, 26th July 2017. A buffet lunch will be provided.
The Activist

NHS WORKERS FEELING THE PINCH

NHS representatives from across the region came together to discuss how best they can support the GMB’s Pay Pinch Campaign in their workplaces. GMB Organiser, Stacey Booth, said: "NHS staff have lost thousands of pounds over the last seven years due to pay freezes and miserly 1% pay awards."

"That coupled with down-banding in Trusts and the rise of inflation has resulted in many NHS employees being reduced to the breadline and in some cases relying on food banks and many are now leaving a profession they love."

Please support the GMB Pay Pinch Campaign by signing our petition online at www.paypinch.org. If you work in the NHS and want to join GMB visit our website at www.gmb.org.uk/join or contact us on 0345 337 7777 and ask for an application form.

BIRTHDAY HATTRICK

The NHS celebrated its 69th birthday on July 5 and GMB Organiser, Stacey Booth, combined two other celebratory events with the GMB Pay Pinch Campaign.

Joe Cohen, GMB Leeds Health Branch Secretary, celebrated his 60th birthday and Stacey welcomed her Granddaughter, Miley Anne Crossfield, into the world.

THE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE PINCHED £13,000 FROM THE AVERAGE PUBLIC SECTOR WORKER WITH A DECADE OF PAY CUTS

END THE PUBLIC SECTOR PAY PINCH
WWW.GMB.ORG.UK/PINCHED

210,000 CHILDREN IN YORKSHIRE HIT BY PUBLIC SECTOR PAY CAP

Our Region’s children are some of the worst hit by ‘cruel’ Government pay pinch

Shocking new figures from GMB show more than 210,000 children in Yorkshire and Humberside are being hit by the public sector pay cap. Analysis of the latest ONS figures show the area has more than 120,000 households where at least one adult works in the public sector as their main job.

The average full time public sector worker in the UK has lost out on £9,000 in wages since the pay cap was introduced in 2010 - and stands to lose a further £4,000 by 2020.

During a recent study of police staff by GMB, one member revealed their pay was so low they couldn’t afford to buy their children clothes.

GMB Regional Secretary, Neil Derrick, said: "If the Government needed something to bring home the reality of their cruel and unnecessary public sector pay pinch – this is it. More than 210,000 children in our region are living under the cosh of constant real-term pay cuts."

"Our cherished public sector workers are now under so much financial strain they are forced to visit food banks – never mind finding the cash to buy their children new clothes or take them on holiday. The fact hundreds of thousands of kids in Yorkshire are growing up in this way in one of the richest countries in the world is a badge of shame. Enough is enough – it’s time to give all our public sector workers the wage they deserve.”
ASPIRE’S GOT THE X-FACTOR!
Adults with learning disabilities light up the stage at GMB-backed event
As part of Adult Learning Disabilities Week, Aspire held their first ever ‘Aspire’s Got the X-Factor’ talent competition at their annual Picnic in the Park event at Temple Newsam on June 23.

GMB’s Leeds Civic Branch and the region sponsored the event and the turnout was fantastic, with hundreds of Aspire customers and their carers in attendance enjoying a fantastic day out. Sarah Barnes from our Regional Organising Team had the honour of presenting the winners of the talent show with a medal.

CAN YOU HELP?
The TUC Young Workers’ Forum has launched as one of its priority campaigns the issue of apprenticeships. We have been asked to collate case studies and examples of apprenticeships that GMB members may be on. We need:

- Case studies of poor quality apprenticeships
- Case studies of where the GMB is making a positive difference on apprenticeships in the workplace.

Does your workplace have apprenticeships and can you assist in providing details on the above? If so, contact Rachel Harrison at rachel.harrison@gmb.org.uk or ring 0345 337 7777.

GMB ADDRESSES LEEDS FOSTER CARERS’ ASSOCIATION
At a recent meeting in Leeds, GMB Organiser, Rachel Harrison, updated a packed meeting of foster carers on our national campaigning successes, including the inclusion of a commitment to support foster carers from the Labour Party in their recent manifesto. This included the promotion of care and educational achievement of our most vulnerable children and an increase in support for children in kinship and foster care and their families.

As well as further regulation of commercial fostering agencies and the commissioning of a review on establishing a National Fostering Service, they are committed to extend ‘Staying Put’ arrangements to support all children and young people in residential and other forms of care until they are 21. Rachel also spoke about GMB’s recent motion passed at Congress regarding Foster Carers and Bogus Employment. This means that our campaign to establish worker status and employment rights for foster carers is now GMB policy and we will be prioritising this in our efforts at all levels.

Also in attendance was Emma Bew from GMB’s Productive Learning Project team who signed up members to training courses and gave advice on funding for training. Neil Cole, GMB Organiser for Leeds foster carers was also on hand to speak to members about any individual issues and to explain the support and representation which GMB offers.
WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Ever wondered what happens to GMB officers once they retire? Well we found a group of them wondering around the hills of the Peak District. The walking-group made up of Bill Chard, Steve Huckerby, Mick Hubbard, Bill Innes and Peter Hunter, meet on a regular basis to enjoy a leisurely stroll in some of the remotest parts of Yorkshire & North Derbyshire. What a fantastic way to keep in touch and long may it continue.

SAFETY IN NUMBERS

Pictured are members of GMB's Regional Organising Team on the campaign trail outside Ecco Safety Group in Leeds. GMB has approached the Leeds site for recognition following the transfer of GMB members from its sister-site, Britax, in Bridlington where we have a recognition agreement in place. Watch this space for future updates on our campaign.

GMB PARTNER WITH WAKEFIELD COUNCIL TO PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

Wakefield Museum and the district’s markets helped to promote this year’s Mental Health Awareness Week (May 8-14). The Council and its partners, including the GMB, organised a series of drop in sessions to help people feel empowered to talk about their feelings and to take part in events which can help boost wellbeing. One in four people will be affected by a mental health condition; these may include depression, anxiety and stress.

The Museum at Wakefield One has teamed up with the Mental Health Museum which is part of South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. Service users and volunteers put on a display which explores some of the cultural, personal and social barriers that can prevent men from speaking out about their mental health. The display is available to view over the summer. During the week, representatives from Turning Point Talking Therapies and other organisations were in many of the district's markets to encourage people to have conversations about mental wellbeing, and receive information on where help is available.

Cllr Jessica Carrington, Mental Health Champion at Wakefield Council, said: "Although strides are being made to encourage a better understanding and support for mental health conditions, I believe much more still needs to be done. I hope the awareness week will be a time when people will feel empowered to talk about their mental health and promote understanding to others who may be going through a difficult stage in their lives."

Neil Cole, GMB Organiser for Wakefield said: “GMB are proud to be a part of this fantastic campaign. This shows our continuing commitment to working with Wakefield Council for the benefit of our membership and the city as a whole.”
Once again, the GMB Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region sent a team of young member volunteers to work the bars at Glastonbury Festival. Although the shifts were busy they had a fantastic time exploring and enjoying the festival.

The delegation did us proud and many new friends and comrades were made. The money earned by our volunteers goes into the Regional Young Members’ Campaigning Fund allowing our young members to run their own campaigns and activities.

YOUNG MEMBERS’ SOCIAL
The Regional Young Members’ Committee has organised a social event on: Saturday 22nd July 2017 from 5pm at Revolucion de Cuba (64–68 Call Lane, Leeds LS1 6DT). It’s a well deserved opportunity to come together, enjoy some tapas (and cocktails if you like) and relax after a busy six months of GMB and Labour Party campaigning. It would be great to see some new faces. All are welcome so please come and join us. Please RSVP to rachel.harrison@gmb.org.uk or check out the event link on our Facebook page (GMB Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region Young Members).

YOUNG MEMBERS’ MEETING
Come and join us to discuss current campaigns and activities and plan for the next 6 months on: Thursday 27th July 2017 5pm - 7pm at GMB Regional Office (Grove Hall, 60 College Grove Road, Wakefield WF1 3RN). This is a great opportunity for young members who have never been to one of our meetings to come along and meet the Regional Committee. We have some fantastic campaigns running at the moment and it’s time to decide on the next steps… and there will be pizza! Please RSVP to rachel.harrison@gmb.org.uk or check out the event link on our Facebook page (GMB Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region Young Members). If you are unable to attend these events but would like more information about getting involved with our GMB Young Members’ Section please contact Rachel Harrison, GMB Young Members’ Officer.

ARE YOU UNDER 25 YEARS OLD?
Are you affected by the National Minimum Wage age banding which means you are paid less than colleagues who are aged 25 or above? If so, we would like to speak to you. Please contact us so we can incorporate your experience into the GMB campaign for removal of these discriminatory age bands.

GMB National Office is co-ordinating our response to the Low Pay Commission’s latest report and following on from the Young Members’ Network’s Living Wage campaigns (£10NOW and Wages Not based On Ages) we are keen to find more evidence of how low pay continues to affect young workers across the UK and whether employers are complying to pay the correct wage rate for their workers.

Facebook: GMB Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region Young Members
Twitter: @gmbyoungyorks
Comedian Eddie Izzard joined hundreds of runners at a GMB sponsored memorial event to honour and remember murdered MP Jo Cox. The Run for Jo, which was held at Birstall’s Oakwell Hall, saw more than 600 competitors come together to remember and pay tribute to Jo and everything she stood for.

Also taking part in the run was her family, widower Brendan Cox and sister Kim Leadbeater, who did a fantastic job leading the runners in their warm-up. Even the GMB mascot got in on the action when he took part in a mascot race, coming a respectable fifth place out of 18. The idea behind the run came from GMB members Julie Smith and Caroline Jones from GMB Organising Branch who wanted to do something to bring the community together in Jo’s name. Kim Leadbeater said afterwards, “There’s a real appetite for bringing people together. We have to counter and provide balance for all the very bad things that are happening in the world at the moment. That is more important than ever.”

WELL DONE ROSIE
Congratulations to Rosie Ford from GMB’s Productive Learning Project (phase 2) on successfully passing her Shorthand course with a distinction, following many months of hard work.

Rosie signed-up for the course following her promotion to the PLP team and has been doing a fantastic job since - this new found skill will be an asset to the team and we wish Rosie all the best.

INCREASE IN GMB CONTRIBUTION RATES 1ST OCTOBER 2017
Congress 2017 agreed an increase of 5 pence per week on grade 1, and 3 pence per week on grade 2 contribution rates with effect from 1st October 2017. See the revised rates below:

**Grade 1:** An increase of 5 pence to £3.05 per week £13.22 per month.
Contracted out rate will be £2.91 per week £12.58 per month.

**Grade 2:** An increase of 3 pence to £1.78 per week £7.72 per month.
Contracted out rate will be £1.70 per week £7.36 per month.

**MPO:** Former MPO members are required to pay contributions according to their remuneration but a minimum equivalent to the GMB grade 1 rate.

**Promotional Rate:** No change 1.00 per week £4.34 per month.

**Sick & Unemployed:** No change 5 pence per week 22p per month.

**Retired Life Membership:** No change, free after qualifying period of 5 years membership.

**Apprentices & Students (No Change):** £2.00 per month for apprentices. £1.00 per month for non-working students. Working students to pay applicable rate to their employment.

The National Administration Unit will notify employers of the increase week commencing 7th August 2017. Direct Debit members will be notified of the increase by email or letter from the General Secretary during August to September 2017 via the NAU.