

Working together in the Norwich region

GMB Union News in Brief...

Issue 6, May 2006

Welcome to the latest addition of the Norwich General Branch Newsletter. This has been a busy period for me, having just moved home, so apologies for there not being a newsletter yet this year. It has been an active period for the branch and the union as a whole. Branch has been holding some positive meetings and is hoping to establish some new operating guidelines to ensure we use our funds ethically and effectively. There will be a discussion at our next branch meeting to agree these guidelines (See over). We hope that all our members will consider making use of the membership form included in this posting. Increasing our membership will not only be a direct financial reward to you, we will be stronger and have more say in the organisation and running of the union as a whole.

The GMB has been actively involved in negotiations throughout the country with many employers. The local government pension scheme dispute has seen organised days of action, which have provoked further talks. A framework for negotiations has been organised and it is hoped that these will be fruitful and that agreement can be reached soon. The GMB continues to fight for the protection of Remploy factories following indications that there will be a massive reduction in the employment of disabled people in the factory network. The GMB has agreed to withdraw their plan to ballot colleagues at Asda for industrial action and ASDA expressed thanks for this gesture. It is hoped that recognition and recruitment will soon be possible throughout the network.

After some lengthy debate, the London Regional Council has rejected the proposed merger with the TGWU and AMICUS. This is now London region policy and will be acted on as such at GMB 2006 Congress.

Election of General Secretary and Treasurer

On 11th March, Congress 2005 reconvened to receive the Report of the Inquiry into allegations concerning national elections. Congress debated the report and accepted recommendations for changes to the rules and procedures that govern the Union's national elections. Congress then approved a proposal by the Central Executive Council to hold an immediate election for the office of General Secretary and Treasurer of the Union. You will now have, or be receiving soon a voting form to elect a new general secretary for the GMB. Our Branch was requested to nominate a candidate for the election and in response we nominated Paul Kenny (pictured). Please make every effort to vote and return your forms.



Your GMB Learning Projects, Now Online

www.gmbunion-eastlearning.org

Why not take a look at the Union learning website. It has been revamped to show the workplace learning that has gone on in this region. You can see lots of photos of activities and you may see someone you work with on there! Log on to the site and click on the workplace projects from the home page.



Congress 2006

Regional branches voted for Keith Rowley to represent our section at Congress 2006 and Terry Nokes will be attending as an observer. N24 Branch has submitted 2 motions and a rule change. The rule change is for Rule 14 - General Secretary and Treasurer. The motions for congress are entitled: 'Freedom of Speech in the GMB' and 'Financial and Political Support for MP's'. If you would like further details about these motions, please contact the branch secretary. If you have any queries about branch, or issues in this newsletter please contact me via e-mail:

secretary@norwichgmb.com or call 07979 684494. Steve Moore.

Please have your say... Next Branch Meeting:

7th June 2006, 7:30pm, Angel Gardens PH, Norwich

Branch Funds Discussions

In direct response to the treasurer's report for 2005/6, branch requested that a sub committee be formed to discuss the use of its surplus funds. This sub committee has held 2 meetings and has set out proposals to put to the next branch meeting on June 7th. The proposals include methods of increasing membership, criteria for supporting donations and affiliations, assisting members with hardship claims and the sponsoring of all retired life time membership payment.

As a result of the membership discussions you will find a membership form with this newsletter with a letter explaining how you can earn cash for helping us increase our membership and union strength. All are welcome to attend the branch meeting to discuss these proposals and agree which should be implemented in the future.

Feeling the Heat – Health & Safety Leaflet



As temperatures rise, workers in all industries suffer. Working in excessive heat is not only uncomfortable, **it can be dangerous!** Hot work, whether in an office or outdoors, can lead to accidents and injuries. The GMB has a comprehensive leaflet to inform you of your rights and let you know what your employer should be doing.

All employees have the right to work in a safe and healthy environment. If you are not getting fair treatment at your work you should contact the GMB now! Outdoor problems encompass issues such as: heat stress, cancer, and eye protection. Indoor problems such as extreme heat must be addressed by your employer. The GMB can work with you to take action to reduce the temperature at work.

A varied Group....

For those who do not attend branch meetings it may interest you to know who the members of the N24 General Branch are. We have members from a variety of trades and companies. It is clearly an advantage for shop stewards and safety reps to get to know one another and to share any information and experiences. The majority of our members work for the companies below. If you think your workplace can gain from another's experiences, then we can put you in contact with each other. Branch meetings are an excellent opportunity to learn from each other and assist with negotiations and Health & Safety issues. All members are most welcome to attend.



FREE access to the GMB pay, conditions and bargaining data

If you are involved in negotiations at any level, the GMB pay and conditions service is there for you. It holds details of 2,500 agreements covering pay, hours, holidays and other conditions of employment, such as maternity arrangement, paternity leave, London weighting and mileage allowances, plus short comments on key trends in individual settlements. You can use it, for example, to compare pay increases and pay rates in your own industry/region, or you can spread the net wider, perhaps to check on new developments like parental leave. Both the private and public sectors are covered.

For more information contact the branch secretary or regional office.

Donations made

The following donations were made by branch in the last quarter: Let the Children Live £50, TENDER £50, Pakistan Presidents Earthquake Appeal £250, Maggie's Appeal £50. Donation requests and application will be discussed at the next branch meeting, 7th June 2006.

Membership News

The Norwich N24 branch membership continues to rise and we are hoping the recruitment forms included will help boost our numbers further. We are close to 1600 members and we would benefit enormously if we were able to reach 2000. This would give us automatic representation at Congress and help us represent all our members directly. Please consider recruiting new members and remember there's reward in it for you!