

RECOGNITION AGREEMENT SIGNED WITH



WIGAN

PAGE 4



**WISHING ALL OUR MEMBERS A HAPPY,
PROSPEROUS AND, ABOVE ALL, SAFE
NEW YEAR!**

RECOGNITION AGREEMENT
SIGNED WITH
MyFresh WIGAN
PAGE 4



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EDITOR'S NOTES

"I'm fed up of hearing
Labour grandees
like Blair, Kinnock,
Mandelson and others
saying that Corbyn is
unelectable"

Ronnie Draper @ronniebfawu

IF I HAD TO SUM UP 2016 in two words, for me it would be 'Political turmoil', although I am sure there would be many different interpretations of the challenges the year has brought.

On January 1st we had *Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum*, Cameron and Osborne, at the helm of UK government, and Corbyn as Labour Party leader, Obama as the most powerful individual in the world and we hadn't even started the debates about membership of the European Union.

Now we have May and Hammond doing more U-turns than a stunt driver (in fact when I first heard May and Hammond were leading the country I wondered what had happened to Jeremy Clarkson). We have *Brexit* causing more confusion than the Times crossword and the USA Presidential Election demonstrating that sometimes the clown *does* gets to run the circus. *Strange times and stranger times to come.*

The only thing that remotely resembles a constant is that Jeremy Corbyn who, after a long and bitter campaign, has cemented his leadership of the labour party for the second time. The unprecedented attack by the right wing of the party served only to deepen the resolve of the Corbynistas whilst creating fissures that will take years to heal.

The Blairite threat

Was Owen Smith a genuine candidate or a stalking horse for a future challenge? Who knows? However, as sure as eggs are eggs, the Blairites will not rest until they take control of our party and drag it further to the right.

I got fed up of hearing Labour grandees like Blair, Kinnock, Mandelson and others saying that Corbyn is unelectable – this despite the many election victories he had gained in such a short time.

That's a particularly rich comment coming from Mr 100% Kinnock – played two, lost two – the man who had a victory parade the day before a General Election, only to find that 24 hours later he had enough egg on his face to keep a small nation going in omelettes for a year. We didn't hear so much outpouring of internal venom when Brown or Miliband lost, or indeed when Blair led us into war.

...when I first heard May and Hammond were leading the country I wondered what on earth had happened to Jeremy Clarkson

The truth is they are scared that Corbyn will be elected and that for the first time since post-World War II we would have a programme of policies aimed at improving the lives of those most in need: *decent affordable housing, education open to all, a proper living wage* and, of course, *a National Health Service free at the point of need, open to all and in public hands.*

What else needs fixing?

Put these things on top of a nationalised railway system, strengthening of our environmental pledges, return of workers' rights, access to justice and controls on Rachmann-style landlords and you quickly see that we *can* take our country back. I don't promise it will be easy but we are building a movement that can deliver for those at the bottom of the earnings pile instead of tax cuts and protections against prosecution for those who abuse the system.

A cog in the party machine?

The real fall out of the coup within the Labour Party was the attacks on the individual members by the internal machinery. Ed Miliband wanted members to have a say for £3 per week, but when it was found out that many joined to support the Corbyn campaign they were *barred*.

Many like me, who openly supported Corbyn found ourselves suspended for spurious reasons, but unlike me, did not get back in until after the vote. Many still find themselves suspended without reason, without a hearing and without *a right to appeal*.

Where's Franz Kafka when you need him?

I was lucky, I got a hearing and was able to successfully appeal my suspension, but that was because they didn't want the furore that would have followed suspension of the General Secretary of an affiliate. I didn't ask for privilege but was given it.

They use algorithms to catch people out without setting out first what offending words they would look like. John and Sam Vickers were both suspended without charge and re-admitted 3 months later without explanation.

It is a bent system that needs correcting, but it won't be fixed by deserting the party, quite the opposite.

Let's take back our future

We have to build a mass movement, ensure we stand for positions of authority and introduce democratic change. We are knocking at an open door with the Tories' nemesis, Europe, pulling them apart

Let's all hope that 2017 brings some relief from the constant attacks coming from all directions whether it be government, council or from unscrupulous employers who seek to maximise profits by attacking terms and conditions and culling jobs.

Working people, the unemployed, the disabled and the aged need an even break after years of austerity, pay freezes and benefit cuts. **Only a Labour government can deliver these values, but they need our support.**

May I take this opportunity to wish all our members, activists, staff and FTOs a peaceful festive period and a happy and prosperous new year and to thank you for your continued support.

Solidarity!

**Ronnie Draper
General Secretary**

NATIONAL PRESIDENT IAN HODSON

When a society is unequal, when poverty is normalised and injustice is common, who should we blame? the people who created it or the people suffering because of it?

AS WE COME TO THE END OF 2016, it would appear that the divisions between the richest and poorest in this country are deeper and wider than ever. Once again, *divide and rule* tactics have won the day, as the wealthy have ensured that the middle classes blame the working classes for everything, and those without two ha'pennies to rub together are set squabbling amongst themselves for scraps thrown from the top table.

People have been encouraged to demonise the unemployed, the elderly and the disabled, whilst being conditioned to fear and distrust immigrants. Workers' rights continue to be eroded and unscrupulous employers continue to abuse and exploit their labour. All of this goes on unabated, while incomes for the richest in our society have continued to soar.

Who's to blame?

When a society is unequal, when poverty is normalised and injustice is common, who should we blame? the people who created it or the people suffering because of it? Despite years of history for reference, I cannot think of a single shred of evidence to back up the theory that by blaming minorities for all of society's ills, those on low incomes will all somehow become wealthy.

Look around you: public services slashed and sold off to private companies, ordinary people being priced out of further education and social/workplace justice, an underfunded NHS, agency labour and zero hours contracts exploitation, council houses sold off to private landlords, foodbanks and homelessness, inability to get on the housing ladder or plan for retirement.

Are we really to believe that this is all the fault of *immigrants*, the *disabled*, the *unemployed* and the *elderly*?

Despite this insanity, we fall for this line time and again. Why? For whatever reason, vast numbers of people find it difficult to open their eyes and comprehend the fact that we allow ourselves to be told how to react to various groups of people, issues and situations by a wealthy few with influential positions and willingly accept their agenda without question.

Is politics broken?

The misery is further compounded by the fact that our political system is broken. From Margaret Thatcher's government onwards, people have become conditioned to look out for number one, with a '*survival of the fittest mentality*', all underpinned with a culture of '*look over there*' politics.



As a result, we've ended up with a suited and booted, straight-out-of-university generation of *careerist politicians*, whose ideology is to give the majority of people just about enough to keep them from kicking up a fuss, whilst making the rich richer and richer.

The Blair/Brown administration, for example, is lauded for introducing a minimum wage (that was set too low) and subsidised poverty pay via tax credits, whilst taking relatively good care of the NHS. Is that all? **They were in power for thirteen years**, but did only just enough to reasonably satisfy the majority. Subsequently, the UK has drifted to the political right, to such a degree that anyone even slightly to the left of Genghis Khan is seen as some sort of raging, Marxist lunatic.

Why support Corbyn?

This Union supported, and continues to support Jeremy Corbyn as leader of the Labour Party. Not because he's some retro throwback to the 1970s and not simply because he's 'hard-left' (whatever that means). The BFAWU supports Mr Corbyn because he believes in *fair play, social justice, workers rights and the repeal of anti-Trade Union legislation*.

The BFAWU supports Jeremy Corbyn because he has good policies: the re-nationalisation of the railways, a minimum wage of £10 an hour. He wants to scrap the Bedroom Tax, scrap the Work Capability Assessment, reduce the intrusion of the private sector in the NHS and provide free education for all. He believes in a peaceful foreign policy and a sound industrial strategy that would protect key industries and get the country manufacturing again. In many other European countries, these policies would be seen as **common sense**.

The fact that they're seen as 'radical' and 'hard-left' ideas in this country tells it's own story.

Only in America...

Donald Trump has just been elected to take over from Barack Obama as President of the United States. Understandably, people are worried about what this will mean for the world, especially given his behaviour as a tax-avoiding businessman who isn't a stranger to bankruptcy, along with the sexist and racist rhetoric he used in his election campaign.

How did he win? That's easy. The Democratic Party decided to ditch Bernie Sanders; a seasoned politician and an inspiring candidate who was popular with the electorate, way ahead of Trump in the polls, engaged with young voters, had policies that people agreed with and certainly knew how to rally support.

Instead, Democrats sacrificed their electability by throwing their weight behind Hillary Clinton – an unpopular, flawed, Wall Street-funded, pro-war, establishment friend of big corporations.

Trump? Anti-establishment?

In the end, people faced a stark choice. Trump won, ultimately, because he appealed to struggling people in former manufacturing towns and cities who had seen jobs and local industries farmed out to other countries in the interest of *cheaper labour*. They felt left behind and wanted to fight back.

His rhetoric also tapped in to the worst parts of people and those who wanted to give the Establishment a bloody nose. **We can't view this as a shock**. Labour Party members and supporters elected Jeremy Corbyn as their leader not once, but *twice*. They did so because they see him as an anti-Establishment figure, *who can't be bought*.

The UK voted for Brexit because it was seen as a swipe against the Establishment. Rightly or wrongly, people are making political choices based on their anger and how disaffected they feel towards a political class that has let them down, out of touch with their lives and aspirations.

But here in Britain?

As a country, we can't really mock or criticise the electoral choices of any other nation, can we? We made influential politicians out of Boris Johnson and Nigel Farage, whilst making a world leader out of the idiotic and incompetent David Cameron.

As for our Theresa May, we have an unelected, 'leader' with a record of homophobia who, as the country's Home Secretary, arranged for ad-vans to drive around London telling immigrants to 'go home'. I think that she and Mr Trump will get on like a house on fire.

The worry is that the people can be easily swept away with Right rhetoric, emanating from Right mouths when they feel angry – the consequences can be dire (think 1930s Germany).

Inclusion not exclusion

It doesn't have to be this way. As a society we must open our eyes and come together. We must resist the temptation to get drawn in to hate and division, and we must stop buying in to the media outlets that perpetuate it. We must ensure that those we elect to political office work for *us*, not just their own interests, or one-percenters with blank cheque books.

Let's start fighting for inclusion, not exclusion. Let's start fighting for decency and dignity, not blame and demonisation. Fighting amongst ourselves benefits only the few, not the many; so let's make 2017 the year where we finally get off our knees and **fight together**.

Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish all our members, full time officials and clerks a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

In solidarity!

Ian Hodson
National President

Cover Story

Recognition Agreement signed at MyFresh, Wigan

WE WOULD LIKE to bring you a bit of good news.

A **Recognition Agreement** was signed at MyFresh, Wigan (part of the *William Jackson Food Group*) after a successful campaign.

We would like to thank all involved and wish a great future to the branch.

George Atwall
Regional Officer





Sarah Woolley reports

THE TRADE UNION CONGRESS was held in Brighton again this year. Myself, Pauline McCarthy and George Atwall accompanied Ronnie, our General Secretary, as delegates.

The agenda was split into four sections:

- Jobs, growth and a new economy
- Respect and a voice at work
- Good services and decent welfare
- Strong unions

Congress looked set to have some interesting debates: originally starting with 84 motions (although some were joined together as *Composites*, being similar in content). An additional 7 Emergency Motions were brought to be discussed, each covering a current battle going on within our movement – both here in the UK and internationally.

BFAWU Motions

As a union we put forward two motions to conference.

The first condemned employers who have used the so called living wage to cut long-established terms and conditions to compensate for their reduction in profits. This was composited with USDAW's motion which called for an *actual living wage* for all workers, regardless of age. The composited motion moved by USDAW and seconded by Ronnie on behalf of the BFAWU was passed *unanimously*.

Our second motion called for low pay to be recognised as an *occupational health threat* and I spoke about the effects of low pay on people, how it affects their stress levels and both mental and physical health as a result. Again, the motion was passed unanimously.

Debating Education

There were some fantastic motions covering current issues within education – cuts to funding, the impending introduction of grammar schools, the effect exams and statistics are having on the mental health of young people (not to mention the impact it's having on teachers and assistants themselves).

If left unchallenged and no action is taken, we will see further irreparable damage to the education of our children, *the poorest in society once again being the worst affected* due to more cuts, fewer fully-trained teaching staff due to the increase in academies.

A new era of separation is dawning for those deemed not intelligent or worthy enough to attend grammar schools, left to suffer the appalling consequences of *academies* with few or no qualified teachers within them.



The refugee crisis

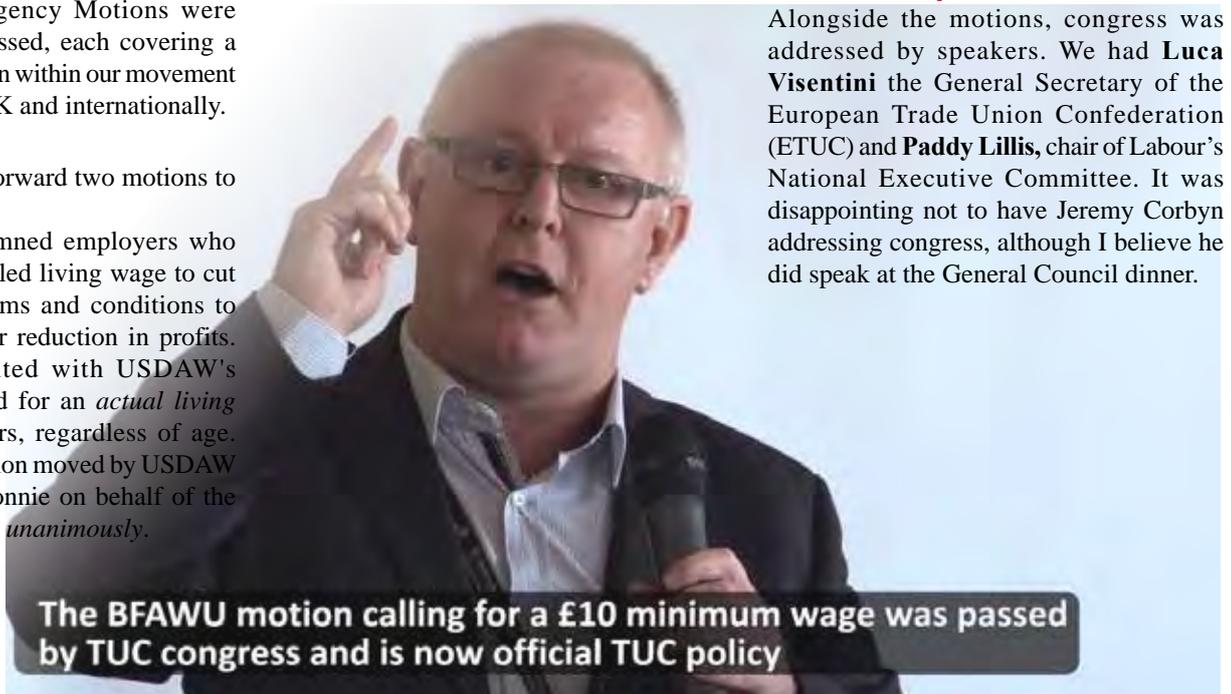
Speakers on Composite Motion 15, concerning the impact of the refugee crisis on children, had the room moved to tears. Delegates heard **Sally Kincaid** (NUT) talking about the use of rubber bullets against the refugees within *The Jungle*. She balanced this with her account of spending a day on the beach of Calais with children who had never experienced the joy of paddling and swimming in the sea even though they were all fully clothed!

The most heart-wrenching, however, was hearing how she'd had to talk an eight-month pregnant woman out of attempting to jump onto a moving lorry.

She thought this was the only option she had to keep herself and her unborn baby *safe*.

Passionate speakers

Alongside the motions, congress was addressed by speakers. We had **Luca Visentini** the General Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and **Paddy Lillis**, chair of Labour's National Executive Committee. It was disappointing not to have Jeremy Corbyn addressing congress, although I believe he did speak at the General Council dinner.



The BFAWU motion calling for a £10 minimum wage was passed by TUC congress and is now official TUC policy

The speaker who resonated with me the most, however, was **Angela Rayner MP**.



She spoke about becoming a mother at a young age and leaving school without any qualifications. She became a care worker and a member of UNISON before becoming a Representative and later serving as a Convenor of UNISON North West, the most senior official in the region. Angela became an MP in 2015 and is living proof that working class, single mums can become anything they want to be, even the Shadow Women and Equalities Minister!

Support the Steelworkers

Composite Motion 4 – *Steel*, called for the TUC to continue to support and raise the profile of the *Save Our Steel* campaign. Amongst other things, a group of steel workers attended Congress and stood on the stage whilst delegates gave them a standing ovation.

Of course the motion was passed unanimously – these workers are only the latest in a long line of those suffering focused attacks by unscrupulous employers with no protection or intervention from the right wing government we are being subjected to.



Former Greek finance minister Yanis Varoufakis welcomed Jeremy Corbyn's election – heralding a genuine and **overdue** debate about UK's future direction

Workers in the NHS

We also passed a motion which called for support for the BMA and junior doctors. The BMA aren't affiliated to the TUC so, disappointingly, we didn't see a stage full of junior doctors or hear one of them speak.

The motion asked for the continued support and solidarity with the BMA and to make the case for a properly-funded NHS (something that is desperately important now the High Court has ruled against them).

As a movement it is our duty to fight for the NHS. We as a trade union represent some of the lowest paid workers in society, these are the people who will truly suffer should we end up with a fully-privatised health service as they are already struggling to survive now.

Campaigning for the next year

The TUC issued its campaign plan:

- Ensuring that working people do not pay the price of the vote to leave the EU – standing as one as a movement to ensure there isn't an assault on the important workers' rights the EU helped to introduce and protect.



Leading the way

- Standing up for **abandoned communities** – the blame for underinvestment in public services and an economy where wages are stagnant and good jobs scarce lies with government policy and *not with each other*.
- **Great jobs for everyone** – including arguing for *fair wages for all*, a real living wage wherever possible and an end to the pay cap in the public sector.
- **Reaching young workers** – increasing union influence, raising its profile and appeal amongst young people
- **Building a stronger movement** after the Trade Union Act – we need to increase membership, extend collective bargaining and get closer to our members' industrial concerns and, not least, raise the turnout at ballots

It's going to be an interesting twelve months seeing the campaigns come to fruition in the different corners of the movement whilst still under a vicious Conservative government though Jeremy Corbyn remaining as leader of the Labour Party is definitely a step in the right direction!

Sarah Woolley

SMALL BUT IMPORTANT VICTORIES



Dear Colleague,

As you know, last month the TUC publicly condemned the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)'s decision to appoint a retired employer to one of the non-executive board member seats reserved for employee representatives. The TUC argued that the principle of an equal voice for employers and workers is enshrined in the Health and Safety at Work Act in order to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of working people. This matter was also the subject of an emergency motion to Congress.

As reported to the last General Council, the TUC has made representations against this decision, including at the highest level of government.

I am pleased to inform you that today I received a letter from the DWP Secretary of State, Damian Green, confirming that a post should be advertised for a new non-executive member to represent the interests of employees on the HSE Board and that we will be consulted by DWP in due course regarding the recruitment process. We appreciate the fact that, throughout, our position has been supported by the HSE chair, Martyn Temple, and by other members of the HSE Board.

Can I take this opportunity to thank unions who have also lobbied the government and others on this issue.

Yours sincerely

Frances
General Secretary

TELL MACDONALDS TO FIX WORKING CONDITIONS AT EUROPEAN STORES NOW!

I'm speaking out against MacDonalDs for exploiting workers and stretching the law to the breaking point across Europe. Join me and tell MacDonalD's to put an end to their most egregious abuses:



- **In the UK, end zero-hour contracts that weaken worker rights.** These contracts are supposed to make it easier for workers to supplement their income...but instead, they make it harder for them to qualify for student loans, mortgages and even phone contracts.
- **In Belgium, stop exploiting loopholes in the law around part-time hiring** – loopholes that let MacDonalDs sidestep complaints about working conditions and keep workers in precarious jobs.
- **In France, end resistance to workers forming works councils.** That means stopping bending the rules in order to make it near impossible for workers to choose trade union representatives.

McDonalDs makes billions in profits worldwide each year – and NO worker deserves to be exploited just so a hugely profitable company can make yet more money.

Tell MacDonalDs: Stop exploiting your workers in Europe and start treating them with dignity and respect.

On November 29, MacDonalD's workers from Belgium, the UK and France will be speaking to the European Parliament about serious problems with MacDonalDs' business model in Europe.

Sign now to stand with MacDonalDs workers across Europe standing up for justice in the workplace.

McDonalDs already has a tax avoidance problem in Europe; we know they lean on their franchisees forcing them to cut corners in every way. Bad labour practices and tax avoidance affect all of us, not just workers. Social dumping hurts workers, taxpayers and essential services we all rely on.

To find out more about the MacDonalDs petitions at the European Parliament, you can access the *European Parliament's Petition Committee* portal at this link:

www.bit.ly/MCDPETI

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE 2016



I WANT TO START by thanking the delegates at our conference in the summer for voting for me to attend the Labour Party Conference in Liverpool in September. As always, it was a good conference, despite the split opinion and betrayal of MPs. I knew that this event would be different, mainly because of the announcement of the results of the leadership election on the Saturday prior to conference start on the Sunday. In my opinion, I think that anyone with a bit of sense could see that Jeremy was going to win again – after all, last time he beat 3 candidates with nearly 60%, and I think that the PLP's betrayal of members, and the NEC purging members would only have angered people, rather than weaken Jeremy's position.

My feeling is that the single, clear message that the NEC and the Leader wanted to hammer home during this conference was the message of **UNITY** – not surprising given the circumstances and the events prior to conference. What I took from this is that it seems there is an olive branch being offered from Jeremy's camp to those people who may have not been overly thrilled with his second victory in the leadership election. **The membership of the party has spoken and I think it's about time the PLP listened to the members and respected their decision. Just because they don't like it, it doesn't mean that they have to spit their dummies out over it!** After all, we on the left had to put up with being in the minority for so long, but the difference was that we had *debate* and *reason* that we used to argue our points, not hate and threats of expulsion.

When **Tom Watson** was making his speech I wasn't overly excited to listen, especially after the role he played in the drama over the summer. He did, however, make one point or commitment which I think is a really good one. He committed an elected Labour government to scrapping the **Doctors' Letter fees** for victims of domestic abuse, which they currently have to pay simply in order to provide evidence to lead to a conviction. As the majority (though not all) of domestic violence victims are women I think this will help a lot of women, and the most vulnerable ones in particular. I think this is a sign that when Labour do get into power, women won't be at the bottom of the pile and *won't be forgotten about*.

Ian Lavery (MP for Wansbeck) spoke about **Workplace 2020** as did many others. His speech to conference made several points which really stuck out. First of all was banishing **zero hour contracts** into history.

As you can imagine, this was music to my ears after all the campaigning that our union has been doing about them. He emphasised how workplaces need to be *fit for purpose* and *fit for the future*, with profound effects on people's working conditions and terms and conditions. Another thing was he talked about using grass roots to find out what is going on within workplaces, and after the scandal of *Sports Direct*, I think that this method will be very helpful to get a proper idea of what exactly is going on and *making sure that management are held accountable for poor practice*.

Scott Courtney from the **SEIU** (representing service employees) in America was the international guest speaker to the conference and his speech was great, it went down really well.



His union is championing the **fight for \$15** in America, which is the sister campaign to our **£10 an hour** campaign. It's always great to hear (and have lots of other people listening) about these campaigns as it's just so important. One fact that Scott shared tells you how important is – since the campaign began, **over 20 million Americans have had a pay increase**, that's a lot of workers who will be better off. I think that alone is good enough reason for us in this country to continue our campaign as the America has shown what can be done and the difference it makes to workers lives.

The highlight of the conference for me had to be Jeremy's speech. Compared to the speech he made last year, this one was better, and not just for me – I think it would have been taken more seriously by the general public. For a start it was much more polished than last year's, which I think will appeal more to the public than his normal laid back style as I think that the public like someone in power who are good polished public speakers (look at *Cameron* and *Blair*, both good public speakers, shame about the policies!). I think the main difference was that he made commitments to *policies* and what Labour would do when they win the General election. There was more detail, more of what sounded like *plans being put in place*.

What the party needs to do now is unite behind Jeremy and make it work, the members have spoken. If the PLP want to disagree and challenge again then I don't think that many of us would take that lying down and the membership would turn against them.

Rachel Mullen



LEARNING SERVICES & APPRENTICESHIPS



BFAWU Learning Services Apprenticeship Seminar 2016

THE BFAWU LEARNING SERVICES have been engaging employers, Full Time Officials, Branch Negotiators and ULRs with regard to the *Apprenticeship Levy* that comes in to force in 2017 as it could have a significant effect on the industry, with the potential to shape employment trends for the future.

Project Manager **John Vickers** had the idea to organise an *Apprenticeship Seminar* to provide information and details as to the workings and possible effects of the Apprenticeship scheme and the Levy – which will impact on employers who have a total wage bill of over £3 million.

The event was opened by **Ronnie Draper** (General Secretary of BFAWU, *pictured above*) and was hosted by **John Vickers** (Project Manager) with **Matt Creagh** (UnionLearn National Policy Officer) and **Mark Rowe** (TUC National Apprenticeship Project Officer) presenting the facts, information and leading the debate.

The event was well attended, with representatives from Employers, Branch Secretaries, Training Officers, HR, Shop Stewards, Full Time Officials, ULRs and Project Workers. Everyone seemed to get a lot out of the event and were very interested in the information they were provided with. It all went to show how much more information is needed.



As a result, Learning Services agreed to give consideration to organising another, more in-depth event as well as an event in the South of England in the near future.

Feedback from attendees:

They found the seminar to be very useful as it addressed issues that seemed to be floating under the radar,

- They didn't realise just how serious the effects of the introduction of the Apprenticeships scheme could be.
- They felt that the Union's Full Time Officials and Negotiating Committees needed to be involved *from day one*.
- All agreed that there needs to be course organised to look at *action planning*.

I would personally like to thank everyone who attended and contributed – with a big thank you to *Matt* and *Mark* for their time and providing the information.

Louise Bennett
Project Administrator
BFAWU Learning Services



FROM ENGLISH CLASSES AT WORK TO A 2.1 DEGREE

SIMA JETHWA'S STORY



SIMA CAME TO ENGLAND and settled in Leicester at the age of 16 with very little English, her first language being Gujarati. She started a part-time job with *Jacobs Biscuits* working the 5.00pm – 10.00pm shift on the biscuit line. It was at this time that she joined the Bakers Food & Allied Worker Union.

She came to one of the many BFAWU Learning Services Open Days promoting English courses and she filled in a *learning needs analysis* – which became the starting point of Sima's learning journey. She attended English courses that were held on Friday mornings (staff didn't work Fridays during January, February and March). We had negotiated the start times and dates through our steering group committee and all courses ran throughout the company's quiet period. The courses were held in the on-site learning centre.

Sima attended her courses and achieved **English levels 1 & 2** and, with the confidence she gained from completing her English courses, she progressed on to go to Leicester College and enrolled on a *Business Studies* course – in which she also gained **levels 1 & 2**. Sima was studying full time with Leicester College but still managed to work the 5.00pm – 10.00pm shift at Jacobs.

She then took the massive decision to do a three year university degree course in *Business Management*. Sima continued with her position at Jacobs while attending university – her days starting at 8.00am and not finishing until 10.30pm.

If she wasn't at work she was in the library every day, including weekends. With the outcomes Sima feels it was well worth doing. She left university with a Upper Second (2.1) degree. She was awarded First Class honours for her dissertation, which was called '*Leadership Impact on Employees Performance*'.

Sima would like to thank the Bakers Food & Allied Workers Union for getting English courses up and running on her site, **Paul McGarry, Paul Mahon** (Branch Secretaries) and the ULRs for all their help and support. She would also like to thank the Jacobs management for giving her time off for revision and exams and allowing her to use the Jacobs business model in her degree.

Where to now? Sima is currently shadowing the factory manager with a view to gaining experience in management. She is also saving hard for her Masters degree which she hopes to take next year.

It was fantastic getting a call from Paul McGarry telling me about Sima's graduation day last July and how the Bakers Food & Allied Workers Union helped in gaining her degree. It's not so very often that we hear about these kind of stories regarding our learners but, as a project worker representing the Bakers Food & Allied Workers Union, I am so pleased we were a part of this amazing achievement.

Janet Goodwin
Project Worker
Learning Services

Photos show:

Top left: Sima in cap and gown receiving her degree

Left: Sima with Janet, her project leader

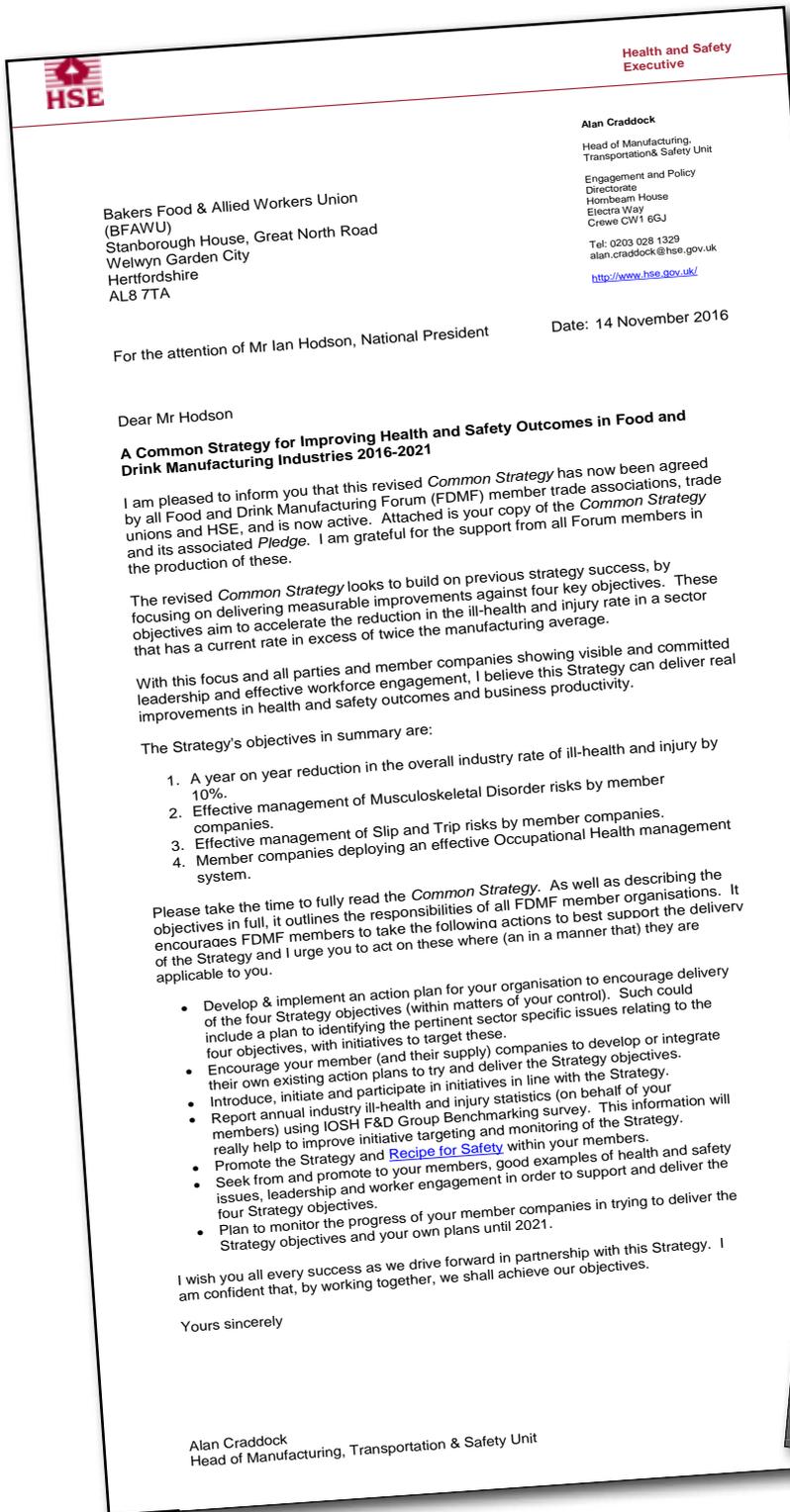
Right: Sima with the two Pauls: **Paul McGarry and Paul Mahon** who helped and supported her





Health and Safety BULLETIN

INDUSTRY ACCEPTS COMMON STRATEGY

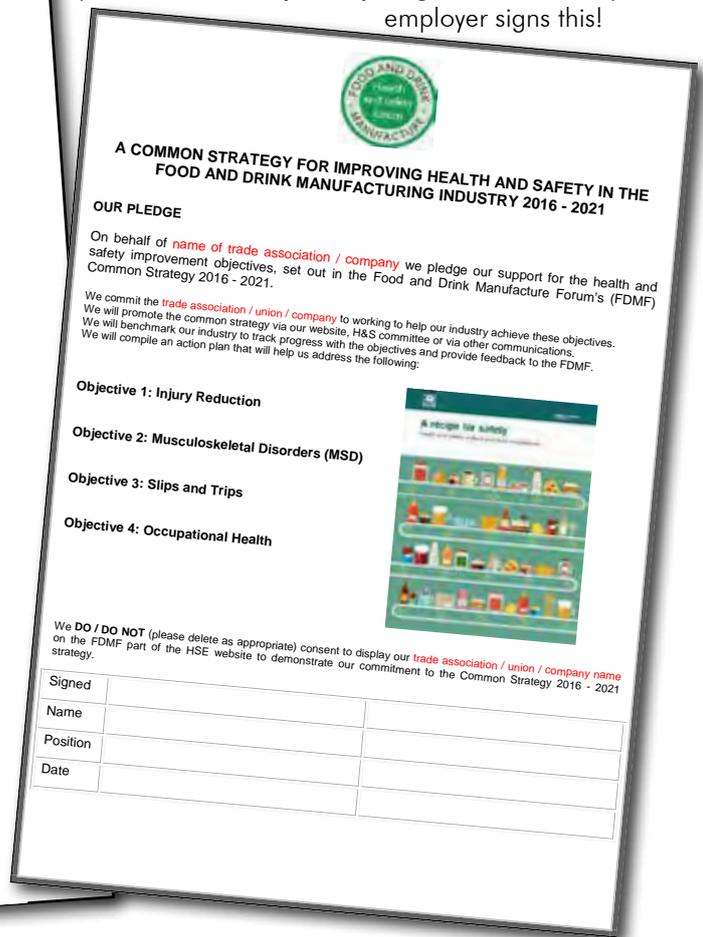


In the **Spring 2016** issue of **Foodworker**, we introduced the **Common Strategy** document, a policy statement to be accepted across our industry to reduce the incidence rate of occupational ill health and injury in the sector.

Since that time we have been working on revising the document itself (see next page) and gathering support from the representative bodies who will be affected by it, and who will be responsible for implementing it.

Just a couple of weeks ago, I received the letter (shown left) from Alan Craddock, Head of Manufacturing, Transportation & Safety Unit at HSE. **Encouraging!**

To promote acceptance of the strategy, we have produced a **workplace pledge** – make sure your employer signs this!



COMMON STRATEGY – A RECIPE FOR SAFETY



A Common Strategy for Improving Health and Safety Outcomes in the Food and Drink Manufacturing Industry 2016-2021 [revised]

The **Food and Drink Manufacture Forum (FDMF)** is a partnership between Trade Associations, Trade Unions and HSE. This voluntary strategy demonstrates FDMF members' clear intent to act together, build upon previous achievements (such as the *Recipe for Safety* initiative) and to improve the health and safety (H&S) performance of the food and drink manufacturing industry.

This forward-looking strategy demonstrates commitment from the food and drink manufacturing industry to the wider national H&S system strategy **Helping GB Work Well**. In order to protect people, central to this strategy is sensible and proportionate *risk management* which supports and enables business productivity and innovation. The strategy has a particular focus on tackling work-related ill-health.



Actions on sharing success and supporting small employers are set out in the strategy. Delivery of the strategy will only be effective through industry leadership (from directors and all other levels within organisations, and by representative organisations) coupled with effective worker engagement.

Strategy Objectives

2016–2021

Objective 1: Ill-health/injury reduction

Reduce the HSE RIDDOR reportable ill-health and injury rate, for the food and drink manufacturing sector, by **10% year-on-year** (starting point 1st April 2016 = 1002/100,000).

Objective 2: Musculoskeletal disorders (MSD) including manual handling and upper limb disorders

Food and drink manufacturing companies to have in place effective arrangements to manage MSD risks. Examples of key actions which companies are encouraged to implement:

- Identifying and assessing key MSD risks using an effective method, such as the ART, MAC, VMAC, RAPP assessment tools or others.

- An action plan to reduce MSD injuries.
- Removing or reducing MSD risks to *as low as is reasonably practicable* e.g. by redesigning tasks, changing work station design and lay-out, mechanisation, job rotation etc.
- Providing practical task-specific MSD training.
- Applying root-cause analysis to the investigation of MSD injuries.

Objective 3: Slips and trips

Food and drink manufacturing companies to have in place effective arrangements to manage their slip and trip risks. Examples of key actions which companies are encouraged to implement:

- Identifying and assessing key slip and trip risks using an effective method, such as SAT or others.
- An action plan to reduce the number of slip and trip injuries.
- Eliminating and reducing slips and trips e.g. by eliminating wet (or other) contamination of floors, walkways, staircases, gantries etc.
- Applying root-cause analysis to the investigation of slip and trip injuries.

Objective 4: Occupational health

Food and drink manufacturing companies to have in place an effective occupational health (OH) management system. Examples of key actions which companies are encouraged to implement:

- Identifying key OH hazards.
- An action plan to reduce the biggest causes of work-related ill-health.
- Developing closer links with OH health providers to involve them in the risk assessment process.
- Specifying key performance indicators for OH.
- Establishing procedures for monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of their OH management system.

COMMON STRATEGY – A RECIPE FOR SAFETY

Key Delivery Actions: Food and Drink Manufacturer's Forum (FDMF)

- Promote the strategy and develop an action plan to deliver the strategy's objectives and monitor delivery against it.
- Develop and implement initiatives in line with this strategy and encourage member organisations to adopt and promote them.
- Share experience and knowledge to determine and communicate the best ways to further reduce injuries and work related ill-health in the food and drink manufacturing industry.
- Promote the importance of effective board / director level leadership, and effective worker engagement to strategy success.

Key Delivery Actions: FDMF Member Organisations

- Promote the strategy and implement their own action plans to help their members deliver the strategy's objectives (within matters under their control).
- Encourage their members to develop or integrate the strategy's objectives into their individual action plans.
- Encourage their members (collectively and individually) to introduce their own initiatives in line with this strategy.
- Promote, to their members, the importance of effective board /director level leadership and effective work force engagement.
- Monitor and feedback on the progress of their members in delivering the strategy's objectives.
- Collect and share their member's ill-health and injury data to inform strategy delivery and to benchmark performance.

All parties agree to promote the *Recipe for Safety* guidance

A recipe for safety is for everyone in the industry, including workers, supervisors, managers, directors, health and safety professionals and health and safety representatives. The guidance covers the main health and safety hazards in the food and drink industries and gives practical advice on how to manage the associated risks. It provides a 'one-stop shop' reference document with links to more detailed guidance.

The latest edition has been revised by HSE and a working group of the FDM H&S Forum. This time it has been written *by the industry for the industry*. The content is even more relevant and accessible to all those working in the food industry. This edition also has an increased focus on **occupational health**, which is a very important focus for the food industry.

A *recipe for safety* is available from HSE.

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg252.htm



To promote awareness of Health & Safety issues in the workplace, we have produced a series of A4 posters on the theme of *Safety Matters!*

If you would like a copy for your workplace, please contact the National President:
ian.hodson@bfawu.org

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND....

SINCE THE EU REFERENDUM which resulted in a narrow majority voting in favour of leaving the EU, the Tories have failed to deliver *any strategy or any plan* on how Brexit will be achieved. Instead we have had nonsense statements like '*Brexit means Brexit*' (glad she cleared that up then) but what is clear to see is the rise of racism on the streets targeting migrants.

Recent news articles suggest hundreds of race hate incidents being reported to police across the country. One of these, it is alleged, resulted in the murder of Polish factory worker, **Arek Jozwik**, in Harlow, Essex on 27 August 2016.

Employers may think that this does not concern them, but discussions at work about the Referendum result, Brexit and immigration could result in workplace tension, an unpleasant atmosphere, feelings of alienation, low morale and even liability in an employment tribunal for *acts and statements* of employees or managers.

Employers must bear in mind that statements made by staff members to other staff (which management may not even be aware of) can result in possible claims. Any comments about *race, colour, nationality, ethnicity or national origins* should be discouraged. This is because the **Equality Act 2010** prevents direct discrimination 'because of' race.



Even if a person has changed nationality, is perceived (wrongly) to have a particular ethnicity or has a relative of a different racial background, comments in the workplace can fall foul of discrimination law – an employer cannot argue, for example, that comments made about the Italian origins of person originally from Italy who has since taken on British citizenship should not attract liability as the employee is now British. An employee subject to taunts or jokes about the ethnicity, colour or national origin of his/her partner can make a potentially successful claim (under the principle of *associative discrimination*).

Cases which have led to employers losing cases in the Tribunal are valuable lessons, even where they occurred long before the referendum.

- An Irish employee whose line manager likened her to the television programme *My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding* won her case (*Harper v Housing*).
- An Eastern European employee was nicknamed '*Borat*' in the case of *Ruda v Tei Ltd*. His employers failed in their argument that all employees had similar nicknames so it was nothing to do with race. The nickname, being linked to his ethnic origins, was clearly because of his race.
- In 2010, in *Basile v Royal College of General Practitioners*, the nickname '*Inspector Clouseau*' was given to a French porter), similarly leading to liability at the employment tribunal.

What may, in the past, have been considered humour or workplace 'banter' could be found to be '*less favourable treatment*' and *harassment*. Such findings in an employment tribunal would be public, embarrassing and [possibly] expensive. **Harassment** is any behaviour which is unwanted by the recipient (here related to race) which violates the employee's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

The behaviour doesn't even need to be *intentional*, if it has this effect.

What should an employer do?

- Have an Equal Opportunities policy, and if one has been in place for some time, *review it*.
 - **If your employer doesn't have one or you are not aware of it, contact your Shop Steward or Full Time Official**
 - Ensure that the Equal Opportunities Policy is **communicated** to all employees. The employer should invest in *training* on diversity and equality.
 - Act on the equal opportunities policy – don't allow a culture of discrimination get a grip in your workplace. A 'paper' policy which is never put into practice is *next to worthless*.
 - Review disciplinary code or disciplinary procedure to make sure it includes acts of discrimination as *unacceptable conduct* which attract a disciplinary sanction (including potential dismissal for *gross misconduct*).
 - Consider introducing a policy on acceptable and courteous staff communications both in and out of the workplace, including *email, SMS text messaging* and *social media*.
 - Employees must have a safe means of *raising queries, issues and complaints*. Some may be informal requests for a manager to 'have a word' or just 'keep an eye out'. Others may be formal complaints or grievances. Appropriate means for both formal and informal issues to be raised should exist for employees.
- Managers at different levels (in other words, line managers and above) should be trained in discrimination awareness and be trained in the means of dealing with informal and formal discrimination issues raised by employees.**
- Where issues are raised, managers should **act**. Guidance to staff as to acceptable behaviour, reminders of workplace policy, investigation of incidents, protection of victims or complainants, disciplining perpetrators are all options to be considered.
- Fair procedures, proportionate action and consistency of treatment of employees are all extremely important.**

...BULLYING IN THE WORKPLACE

WORKPLACE BULLYING CAN HAVE a serious negative impact on individuals and on companies, but is unfortunately common. Everyone benefits from recognising and stopping workplace bullying.

What is workplace bullying?

Workplace bullying is when a person or group of people in a workplace single out another person for unreasonable, embarrassing, or intimidating treatment.

The bully is usually a person in a position in authority who feels threatened by the victim, but in some cases it is a co-worker who is insecure or immature. Workplace bullying can be the result of a single individual acting as a bully or of a company culture that allows or even encourages this kind of negative behaviour.

Workplace bullying can take many forms:

- Shouting or swearing at an employee or otherwise verbally abusing them
- One employee being singled out for unjustified criticism or blame
- An employee being excluded from company activities or having their work/contributions purposefully ignored
- Bullies use language or actions that embarrass or humiliate employees
- Practical jokes, especially if they occur repeatedly to the same person

There are also some things that are usually *not* considered as bullying:

- A manager who shouts at or criticizes all of their employees. This is a sign of a **bad manager** and makes a workplace unpleasant, but it is not bullying unless only one or a few individuals are being unjustifiably singled out.
- A co-worker critical of everything, who always takes credit for successes and passes blame for mistakes, and/or frequently makes hurtful comments or jokes about others. Unless these actions are directed at one individual, they signify **poor social skills**, but not necessarily a workplace bully.
- Negative comments or actions that are based on a person's gender, ethnicity, religion, or other legally-protected status. This is considered as **harassment** which is illegal.



Regardless of its source, workplace bullying can have serious negative effects on employees, such as:

- Stress
- Absenteeism and low productivity
- Lowered self-esteem and depression
- Anxiety
- Digestive upsets
- High blood pressure
- Insomnia
- Trouble with relationships due to stress over work
- Post traumatic stress disorder

Bad for People, Bad for Business

Workplace bullying is also bad for business. Some of the ways that companies suffer due to bullying include:

- **High staff turnover** – expensive for companies as they invest in hiring and training new employees only to lose them shortly afterwards.
- **Low productivity** – employees are not motivated to do their best and are more often off sick due to stress-related illness.
- **Lost innovations** – the bully is more interested in attacking their victim than advancing the company, and victims are less likely to generate new ideas.
- **Difficulty hiring quality employees** – as word spreads that the company has a hostile work environment.

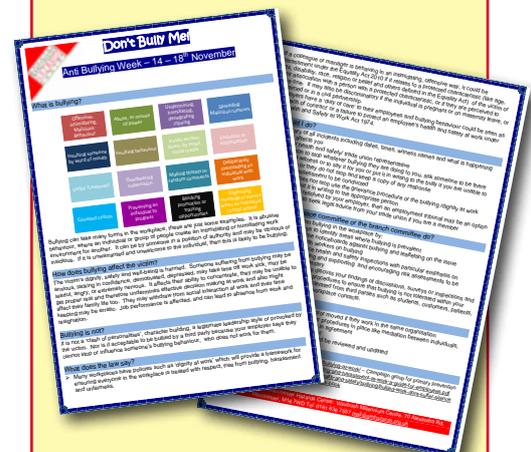
Because treatment by workplace bullies can be devastating to employees *and* business, some companies have instituted **zero-tolerance** policies toward workplace bullying. If an employee is being bullied, they need to document the bullying and present the problem to the proper person in the company, usually someone in HR or higher management.

Companies with good anti-bullying policies usually hold meetings from time to time to remind employees what workplace bullying is, how to report it, and the consequences for bullying.

In some companies, however, there is a company culture of bullying. Usually companies do not *purposefully* support bullying, but they may develop a problem with it either through not taking it seriously or by developing the habit of allocating blame and fault-finding instead of solving problems. In these companies, employees who make a case against bullies may find that the bullying only gets worse. In this situation, employees often have to either make the best of the situation or find different employment.

Employees who are or have been victims of workplace bullying should realise that *it is not their fault* that they are being bullied. If they are suffering negative effects from the bullying they should seek help from a **doctor** or **counsellor**.

If you are being bullied or you witness a fellow worker being bullied, first contact your shop steward.



For a handy poster identifying the issues surrounding Workplace Bullying, contact **GM Hazards Centre:** mail@gmhazards.org.uk



FOLLOWING JUNE'S HISTORIC referendum vote, the government is yet to clarify what Brexit actually means and what it will entail. This is a particular cause for concern when considering how it will affect Health and Safety legislation – an issue the Tory governments have been happy to ignore in the past but, equally, one which means so much for BFAWU members.

Many vital laws which empower and protect workers are derived from European legislation. There is a risk that Brexit will enable the government to discard these rights *entirely*. Given the Tories' past record this wouldn't be much of a surprise – despite Theresa May's ludicrous claims to be leading 'the party of the working person'.

The **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974**, acquired from EU Directives, won't be repealed but could be *gradually dismantled* – laws such as those requiring the **safe maintenance of equipment** and **proper training** could be watered down.

BFAWU members will know that existing health and safety legislation is often inadequate and sloppily applied by bosses. The wholly nonsensical state of the current law on working temperatures is one example. We know from a recent survey we carried out with the BFAWU, that 55% of members list high temperatures as a serious workplace issue. Despite the best efforts of the union, this law has been hard to improve.

What evidence do we have to suggest that Brexit could improve an already less than ideal situation?

If you look past the warm words, we are reminded of the all-too-familiar lines peddled time and again by Tory ministers to slam the so-called 'red tape' and 'meaningless bureaucracy' that actually keeps employers in check. They have already rolled back decades of progress by removing automatic liability for breach of health and safety regulations, making it harder to prove that employers should pay for injuries at work.

We also know of the worrying levels of under-reporting of workplace accidents and dangers in the food industry, with many members citing fear of the threat of punishment by management as the cause. With better legislation, employers wouldn't be able to get away with practices that undermine workers and make working environments less safe.

This is why it is essential that Brexit isn't made into an excuse to weaken or dismantle protections. Article 50 should not be triggered until rights at work are **guaranteed** – we will be campaigning hard to make sure this isn't the case.

If Brexit really is to help working people then let's see the government put its money where its mouth is and use it to put in place a health and safety regime that leads the world in its focus on driving standards **up**, not down.

If you've been injured or have become ill as a result of poor health and safety in your workplace, you are not alone – your union Legal Service is here to help. As a BFAWU member, you are entitled to free legal advice and representation from expert solicitors, at no extra cost to you. You and your family are also protected for an accident outside of the workplace, on the road or on holiday.



Gerard Stilliard,
Head of Personal Injury Strategy,
Thompsons Solicitors

Contact BFAWU helpline:
0800 587 7518 for legal support
www.bfawu.org/legal_services

RIP Bro Dick Punshon

ON 26TH OCTOBER I accompanied other friends and comrades to the funeral of Bro **Dick Punshon** who died after a lengthy battle with illness. Dick was sometimes controversial in his views and not totally politically correct in his outpourings, but he was a dedicated, committed member of the BFAWU.

In 1982 when I first got onto the National Executive, Dick was there to guide me in the ways of dealing with the Federation employers (as well as other equally controversial members of our Executive), although it has to be said I struggled for the first few meetings understanding his strong Sunderland dialect, spending many hours nodding when he nodded, smiling when he smiled and frowning to order when he did.



As I got to know him better, I found a loyal trade unionist with a hard exterior and uncompromising attitude to anybody trying to steal an advantage, but a smile that could melt the heart of a tyrant.

An ex-military man who loved his family, Dick had a soft heart for all children and small dogs, a cocktail that made him and many others happy. He was a dour adversary to many, but a loyal friend to many more, borne out by the send-off he was given.

We could tell stories involving Dick Punshon all day without repetition, but for now we will remember him for the difference he made to many people's lives, the laughs he gave us – but most of all for his service as branch official, executive member and vice president.

We will all miss you. Rest In Peace.

Ronnie Draper, General Secretary

40 YEAR AWARDS

I HAVE HAD THE PLEASURE over the last quarter of presenting a number of 40 Year awards, Badges, Free Membership Cards and cheques.

- **Mrs Smith** worked at Lyons Bakery (now Manor Carlton), Barnsley, for 17 years and **Mrs White** for 29!
- I also visited **Mrs Hooson** (pictured below) who worked there for 13 years and **Mrs Parker** (also pictured) who was there nearly as long as Mrs White.

All four ladies shared fond memories of the bakery as well as telling me about how many changes they have seen over the years



Mrs Hooson



Mrs Parker



Mr Cushion

I also presented another 40 year badge, this time to the son of a member who unfortunately passed away before I could meet him. **Mr Cushion** worked for a period of time at Jacksons in Hull but moved around working in a number of small bakeries before and after. Moving to Cooplands in Doncaster, he spent his last few working years at Heinzels before becoming a carer for his wife. It was lovely to hear from his son how proud he was to be a member of our union! His only regret was that he did not know about the union sooner as with working in small bakeries as it would have doubled his length of membership!

Sarah Woolley
Organising Regional Secretary



MOHAMMED MUSHTAQ

MOHAMMED MUSHTAQ'S 40 year award was presented by **Steven Tate** (Site Process Manager and acting CO) and myself at Hovis, Bradford on Tuesday 20th September.

I thanked Mohammed for his forty years service to the BFAWU and explained what a great achievement reaching forty years is. I presented him with the certificate and cheque. Upon this, Steve Tate also thanked Mohammed and acknowledged the achievement and praised him for his loyal service at Hovis.

Steve went on to inform Mohammed that Hovis would match the cash part of the award in recognition of his loyal service.

Mohammed thanked everyone but was a bit overwhelmed by the presentation so did not make a speech

David Suddards
Branch Secretary



PARK CAKES, OLDHAM

IT WAS CELEBRATION TIME at Park Cakes, Oldham when Trevor Cannon presented two members with their 40 Year Awards and Free Membership cards.

Top:

Shanta Mistry who joined the Union on the 1st March 1976

Below:

Janet Scott who joined on 5th July 1976.



PREMIER FOODS, CARLTON

WE HAVE HAD TWO MEMBERS who have been presented with 40 year badges, cards and cheques.

The sporty Lady on the left is **Elizabeth Dunn** who goes by the name *Min*.

Min has worked all round the bakery in a variety of roles, currently working in dispatch. From my point of view, Min has been a active member of the BFAWU and is a ULR.

I would personally like Min for her loyalty over the years.

The other Lady, pictured here with me, is **Monica Cowdell**.

Monica has worked for many years in Laundry and Hygiene stores .I don't how many name badges she will have ironed on or pressed over all the years but I bet it's a lot!. Monica has always been happy to help people, her attitude is so refreshing. She has also helped to raise lots of money for charities over the years.

I would personally like to thank Monica for her loyalty over the years.

Pauline McCarthy
Branch Secretary





www.rt.com/shows/sputnik/366644-anti-%D1%B1orbyn-election-media/

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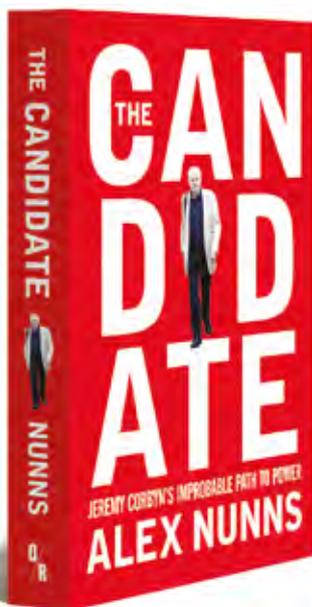
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