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*Bolton's Got Talent
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Intro...

Christine Collins, Assistant Branch Secretary of Bolton UNISON gives her review of the year...

Being a union member means we have lots to do, sticking together and working together. We have not seen such a right-wing government in our lifetime. We've seen corruption in a government up to its neck in sleaze, with corporate buddies alongside media moguls in a profiteering bonanza. All this whilst keeping a straight face proclaiming they can't afford to pay workers decent wages.

The Government has abandoned all pretence of rewarding workers who work hard. Instead they have targeted the vulnerable, scapegoating people on benefits, those on state pensions, people with disabilities, migrants and workers needing a 'top up' to their wages. The Government's game plan is a war of blame to distract ordinary people from directing anger to those at the top.

The Government didn't reckon on the working-class uniting. Several hundreds of thousands of workers have voted to take action, and your branch leadership

has been out and about, showing solidarity to others in struggle.

History shows that we have always had to organise and fight for everything we benefit from today, but the struggle continues. The great Rob Crow (RMT) famously told his members *'If you fight you won't always win. But if you don't fight you will always lose'*.

I am proud to be part of a fighting, forward thinking branch. At this year's AGM we agreed an Organising Plan to help us build the strong, vibrant, UNISON branch we need for the future. It's been an honour to lead the branch whilst our Branch Secretary, Andrea Egan, has represented UNISON nationally as our union President. Now that tenure is over, it's great to have Andrea back, and I look forward to us working together, alongside all our hard-working activists over the year ahead.

**Christine Collins
Assistant Branch Secretary**

Almost £300,000 In Back Pay For Council and Schools Workers!

Bolton UNISON secures huge back pay for over two thousand council and schools workers...

Earlier this year, Bolton UNISON Branch secured deals worth around £300,000 with Bolton Council for over two thousand council workers and schools staff. The deal followed a long running disagreement affecting the holiday pay of hundreds of workers.

UNISON secured agreements to settle the row, with an estimated £296,000 in backdated holiday pay for 2,185 staff, having successfully argued that the workers concerned had been underpaid due to miscalculations that failed to take account of overtime pay and other enhancements.

Dawn Longworth, HR manager for Bolton Council, confirmed the numbers of staff affected and the amount of back pay concerned as follows:-

1. 1,300 Bolton Council staff to receive a combined sum of £254,000
2. 885 school employees to receive a combined sum of £43,000

"I am absolutely delighted that Bolton UNISON secured back pay of nearly £300,000 in holiday pay for over 2,000 workers" says Christine Collins, Assistant Branch Secretary, "We know that many of our members have

really struggled with rising living costs, especially after a decade of below inflation pay rises, so the back pay could not come at a better time. We mustn't forget however, that this is pay the workers were entitled to and should have already received.

"For us, the law is crystal clear, employers must take account of additional payments including overtime and other enhancements throughout the year when calculating workers' holiday pay" she explains "Bolton Council had failed to do this, so it was fantastic news when the Council accepted this principle. Following discussions with HR, we received a positive commitment to resolve this issue. Bolton UNISON is one hundred per cent committed to fighting for our members."

Tony Cowell, UNISON rep for Bolton Council's Refuse Collection Dept, adds: "Securing back pay of nearly three hundred thousand pounds has been a brilliant success for UNISON and its members. After almost two years of a constant battle, we got there in the end. I am really pleased that we have achieved this win for our workforce, thanks to the support of Christine Collins and the union."

My Year as UNISON's President 2022- 2023

Bolton Branch Secretary, Andrea Egan, has just returned from a year as the national UNISON President. Here she sums up the experience...

At the close of conference June 2022, after being on the union National Executive Committee (NEC) for six years, it was deflating to see a vote of no confidence in the NEC. That said, it was always about the political argument, and who runs the union. My tenure as UNISON's President in 2022 started with that vote, and the crisis of our members surviving the worst, most vicious attacks as working-class people from the most right-wing government we have ever had.

I have always identified as a proud working-class woman, understanding, and living the struggle. Having been active for over thirty years, I am grateful to the union for the platform it has given me to fight for UNISON members and my community.

Being part of UNISON has enabled me to develop my passions – fighting for equality...defending public services...and helping to bring others into the movement.

My very first day as President saw me in London on the TUC, *We Demand Better* lobby of Parliament in response to the oncoming tsunami of cuts to our living standards. I'm proud to have been involved in leading the union



during a critical year for UNISON members, fighting to improve pay and end in-work poverty.

As President, I've seen vast amounts of activity across UNISON in each of the four nations through worrying times for members. The devolved governments of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are often undermined from Westminster. In Wales and Northern Ireland, I met with ministers to discuss the work of our members and successful results achieved, despite obstacles in the way. I also took the opportunity to visit regions up and down the country to see first-hand, fantastic work to improve the lives of our members and the communities we serve.

As the UK erupted into a year of discontent, trade unions across all sectors took industrial action, including postal workers, train drivers, rail staff, teachers, bus drivers, dockers, and many sectors within our own union. I have regularly attended



picket lines with members of UNISON and other unions in dispute to offer solidarity and moral support. Mick Lynch, RMT, General Secretary, became an overnight sensation, famously saying *"The working class is back, we refuse to be humble, and we refuse to be poor anymore"*. I have had the honour of standing with Mick on picket lines and sharing a platform at various events.

I have attended and spoken at numerous regional committees, conferences, Self Organised Groups and campaign events backed by trade unions. I firmly believe members need honesty, and have taken every chance to highlight the dangers of a corrupted government and an increasingly broken society, with NHS, schools and local councils struggling to provide the bare minimum to local

communities.

Sadly, we have seen outrageous attacks on our equalities agenda. The nature of the debate around immigration and the hostile environment has seen a growth in dangerous right-wing rhetoric underlying the importance of challenging racism and discrimination in every form. I am proud that our union remains at the forefront of challenging racist attitudes to migrants, supporting campaigns such as *Stand up to Racism* to highlight the desperate plight of migrants trying to gain safe access to the UK.

Increasingly our trans siblings are under attack, and I was honoured to attend UNISON's launch of Trans Ally Training. In Bolton we have completed consultation with Bolton Council



on transitioning in the workplace. We must also keep up the fight for dignity of disabled people and raising the profile on women's rights, in a world where misogyny and violence towards women remain alarmingly widespread.

As President, I was instrumental in starting the journey of 2023 being the Year of Black Workers in UNISON, and embarked on work to award both Baroness Doreen Lawrence OBE and Dr Neville Lawrence OBE, honorary UNISON membership. The National Black Members Committee have developed a comprehensive work programme for branches, regions and service groups. We must make UNISON's Year of Black Workers count. We cannot stand by while any of our members continue to face the injustice of racism and inequality at work or in society.

As UNISON President, I have taken part in international union delegations. Last October, I joined trade union comrades in Ankara to observe the trial of leading members of the Turkish health workers' union SES, charged with terrorist offences simply for representing workers. Turkey continues to be a dangerous place to organise, and colleagues in the country need our solidarity in their struggle for democracy and workers' rights.

In May of this year, I went to Cuba with UNISON's North West International Committee. It was an inspiring, humbling visit to see poverty and solidarity against the injustice of the USA's economic blockade, and

the unjust label of being a terrorist state. On behalf of UNISON, I was presented with the Enrique Hart Davalos Distinction, awarded by the Public Administration Workers' General Secretary in recognition of the many years of solidarity to Cuba. I also got the chance to catch up with Rene and Fernando Gonzalez (from the Miami 5) and Teresita Vicente Sotolongo the former Cuban Ambassador to the UK. One of the highlights of the trip was attending a CDR neighbourhood street party where we shared food and songs. It was incredible to see people of all ages dancing into the night, even during a power cut. Everyone was there, from babies in prams and teenagers, to an amazing 94-year-old called Sylvie, a committed supporter of the revolution, who showed us up with her stamina and dancing!

And finally... My chosen presidential charity was Endeavour, a Bolton based registered charity offering a wide

range of services, including front line community-based support, group work and counselling for those affected by domestic abuse. I chose Endeavour having been an activist in the women's movement all my working life, and, through my job role, seeing the impact that domestic violence has on women and their families.

Endeavour's motto is 'No-one gets left behind' with male and LGBT+ people encouraged to access support, while it has in-house pet fostering service to enable those with pets to flee an abusive household without surrendering their animals.

I am so very pleased and proud of UNISON, because my charity has raised almost £40,000 and made £5,000 at our National Conference on the sale of *Worry Monsters*, which means 250 worry monsters will be made available to children within families that Endeavour is working with.



Bolton's Got Talent...



Dogged determination. Human and doggie psychology meet when Bolton Community Assessment Officer, Jayne Stott, is coaching canines...

After a hard day doing needs assessments for the community, Jayne Stott relaxes by getting down with the dogs. As well as having her own pet and any that she happens to be looking after, Jayne, a qualified trainer, helps people to be at one with their pooch.

"It's something I've always done" she explains "If I've had a stressful day

at work, I might not feel like doing something dog-related but I get out and do it, and it just makes me feel so much better."

Although Jayne's canine life skills business, Firwood Dog Training, only started three years ago, she got her first qualification, a certificate in animal management, at 17 and has been on a zillion courses ever since, perfecting her

reward based methods.

Jayne cites the big three most common canine naughtiness as not coming back when called, or 'rubbish recall' as she puts it; pulling on the lead, or a lack of loose lead walking; and not settling in the pub or house.

"People want support with house training and just general manners really, like how dogs can fit into our everyday lives" she explains "When I was little we didn't expect our dog to go to the pub..."

Now, with most pubs and cafes going out of their way to make dogs welcome, some mutts make themselves over welcome. To settle them, Jayne recommends a special blanket for them to lie down on, having been primed with rewards at home to get results. If, at first, the dog just looks at the blanket it gets a small treat, and so the exercise continues until the blanket itself is a cue for lying down.

"Dogs aren't daft, they know that if they lie on the blanket they get a reward" she explains "Everything is reward based. I'm a positive trainer, and there's a process that I take my clients through to show them what to do. It's slow but it works.

"I'm a trainer, not a behaviourist, so, for instance, I wouldn't deal with aggression and things like that" she adds "I can deal with dogs barking at the end of a lead because quite often it's just frustration rather than '*I want to get at you and rip your head off*'... but I can pass people on to friends who do work in this area and who have degrees in animal behaviour."

In Jayne's day job as a Community Assessment Officer, and throughout her 33 year stay at Bolton

Council, she has dealt with the needs of some of the most vulnerable people in the town. This began with a post in the Learning Disabilities Team helping with supportive living, before becoming a member of the Staying Well preventative service for the over 65s, where she was also a UNISON steward. When that service lost its funding, Jayne got her current position with the South District Team. She maintains that there is a link between her work and her doggie dealings.

"My degree is in learning disability studies and the main bit of that is person centred" she explains "Some of the dog training stuff uses a lot of the psychology that I've been taught through my people stuff. It all crosses over."

During the last three years, Jayne has trained around eighty dogs on a one-to-one basis, with tailor made routes to harmony, and with having the full time Bolton Council job, she only takes on two or three clients at a time. This also allows her to keep rates affordable; £30 for the first visit and £20 per session after that. A small price to pay for absolute puppy love...

For more details of Jayne's work – and some cute doggie photos and videos – see her Facebook page Firwood Dog Training.



Bolton's Got Talent...

A Hole In One For New Swinger In Town Bolton at Home's John Molloy is driving golf forward...

He only took up golf properly during Covid, as Man City home games were out of bounds and the golf clubs were open...but Bolton at Home's John Molloy now has a registered hole in one to his name and trophies for winning the Captains Charity competition at Chorley Golf Club and the Bolton Golf Society event.

"I had tried golf a few times during the year but never really had the time to play as it takes so long" he recalls "I couldn't go to the football, so I joined the golf club in Chorley near me as there was nothing else to do. It was open and I had free time. I loved it, so I've kept it up."

Since then John, who is Head of Neighbourhood Safety Service for Bolton at Home, has gone from strength to strength, even becoming an organiser for the Bolton Golf Society, which has around fifty members drawn from Bolton at Home and Bolton Council staff, and retirees.

"It's been going for twenty years and we do events, usually during the summer, plus an away day later where we stay overnight and have a bit of a competition" John explains "Last year it was Blackpool and this year it's Hill Valley in Cheshire. We also have a dozen retired members, which is really good as you see them and keep in touch."

A popular assumption is that golf is a bit stuffy, a bit expensive, a bit male, a bit old and a bit for lazy walkers...but John disputes all those myths...

"Golf has changed" he insists "It's a lot more fashionable, the equipment has changed and it's a more accessible for young people. My son's a member with me at Chorley Golf

Club. He's 17, it's £80 a year and you can play seven days a week. And they do events for juniors and women. People don't realise how accessible it is."

He adds that some clubs have reduced fees for younger people in their thirties, and even provide free equipment, donated by other members, for younger players. Meanwhile, John insists that you don't even have to be good at golf to play...

"Everybody thinks you have to be good but you don't; there's many golfers who just enjoy the walk round and the social aspect" he explains "It's not just the golf and not to be taken too seriously, just enjoy it. We have people in the Golf Society who don't really play and we put them out last so they don't hold people up, and so they'll enjoy it. You can be as good as you want with lessons and practise, and some clubs even give free lessons. But it's the social side afterwards and the friendships you make. It's like a big community and it's for all people. I've made some really good friends and contacts. I always thought golf clubs were really stuffy but it's been really friendly."

Indeed, this summer, John has been on a golf trip to Ireland with a Bolton at Home colleague and four other players who he met through the sport. It's also helped him go from a Large size to a Medium...

"It keeps you fit" he laughs "I usually walk about five or six miles, and during the winter when I don't have a trolley I'm carrying a bag of golf clubs on my back which is about thirty kilos. I always say to my wife that even the marines don't do this! If you play two or three times a week it's good value for money. It's cheaper than going to the



gym and gets you outside. There's lots of benefits."

John explains that it's also good for the temperament, and has helped some people he knows with mental health issues. It's certainly boosted John's sporting self-esteem, having roared onto the local circuit, beating 160 other players to win that Captains Charity event with a 62 net score, which in the golf world is very good, and also winning last year's Bolton Golf Society tournament. And then there's that hole in one, greeted by leading golfers from throughout the North West...

"In front of us on the course was the Amateur Lancashire Open, which I wasn't actually playing in" he explains "I was just playing behind them but it was on the 18th when the hole in one happened, and they were all on the terrace and witnessed it. So as I was walking off, they were all applauding."

"It was over two hundred yards off the hardest tee and the flag was at the back of the green so you couldn't have made it any harder" he reflects "It was a very long par 3, one of the hardest holes on the course. It's now registered with Golf England so you get admitted to the Hole In One Club. I assumed

everyone had holes in one but it's very rare; some people play for thirty years and never get one."

John had to buy a bottle of whisky to get everyone a drink but now has a trophy with the hallowed ball installed. He has also gone from a 21 handicap to a ten, which is remarkable after just a few years.

It was sporting legend Jesse Owens who said 'You can't win the Olympics if you don't enter'. John Molloy is the perfect example of this. If you don't try something you'll never know just how good you are...

The Bolton Golf Society is open to all male and female employees of Bolton at Home or Bolton Council, and you don't need to be a member of a golf club. This year's event will be at Hill Valley Golf Club 1st and 2nd October (see www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk/hill-valley/golf for details of the venue)

To join the Golf Society or for more details contact...

**Craig.Tyldesley@boltonathome.org.uk;
John.Molloy@boltonathome.org.uk or
Barrie.Hurst@boltonathome.org.uk**

Bolton's Got Talent...



UNISON's One Man Band. Busker Dave Budimir performed in streets all over the world as a one man band before becoming a support worker at Bolton Cares...

For thirty years, as *Buddy One Man Band*, Dave Budimir has been busking around the world, from Tokyo to Queensland to Manchester town centre, with his unique performances and crowd-inducing stack of instruments, including the 'head splash' mallet which protrudes from his hat and beats a cymbal attached to his guitar...

"It just looks a bit better" he explains "It's like a juggler who doesn't get much attention but as soon as he gets the fire out...it gives it that little bit more..."

The head splash was created by Dave and a bloke in Australia as he was travelling around, busking and using his drum as a rucksack. He arrived there after making a sharp exit from Korea, where he was teaching English without

a visa, and Japan, where he honed his act ...

"I was playing saxophone, but I could always play guitar and harmonica so someone said 'Why don't you become a one man band?'" he recalls "So I made a drum, went out in Tokyo and all of a sudden my money sort of doubled. It was just a matter of luck."

After 25 years on the road, and with seven instruments in his show including a pan flute, Dave returned to England busking all over the North West, and outside Marks and Spencer in Manchester where he became almost a fixture, while also working as a support worker for Bolton Cares and becoming a UNISON member.

"I'd been a one man band for twenty five

years and before that I'd been working on farms and things like that; I wanted to see what it was like getting back into normal society" he reflects "Now that I've seen it, I can no longer see the wood for the trees!"

Dave doesn't broadcast to his clients what he does after work..."I used to be more outgoing but now I don't really think much about it. I worked with the same people for quite a long time and they knew because when I'd finish work I'd go into Manchester busking. I play ukulele and clarinet, and I played for one client who loved it, but another moaned about it. If you're a member of staff they don't see it, they just see their support worker playing an instrument."

Indeed, with street performing it's all about the show and Dave is ridiculously experienced and ridiculously brilliant, with a bluesy singing voice that hugs passers-by, those unique instruments and a repertoire that includes three hours of mellifluous songs, including his own compositions, and two hours of folk style sounds..

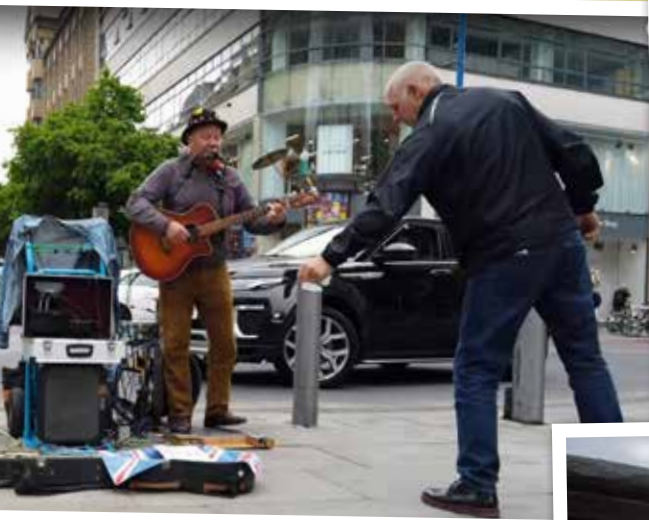
As well as wowing the streets, the *Buddy One Man Band* has also garnered thousands of views on YouTube as people post videos of him performing.* He doesn't go for obvious crowd pleasers, preferring off-key vocals and songs that massage the memory, like The Beatles *Come Together...*and Lindisfarne's *Lady Eleanor...*

"I rarely get tips when I'm playing that" he laughs "but I can't play a popular song because what is popular to one person isn't to another. I must have sang *Stand By Me* millions of times and it's the only song I never get sick of singing. I always start off with it."

Now approaching 65, Dave still performs in Manchester, maybe three or four times a month, but not as much as he used to because busking times are a changing...

"The money has sort of dried up" he decides "I know people don't have as much money but everyone seems to be wrapped up in their phones. When I played outside Marks and Sparks people used to sit and watch me but now they





sit for two minutes, then they get their phones out and they're gone. After an hour, if everyone who took a photo of me gave me a pound I'd be doing well. But they just take a photo and then walk off, some of them getting right up close to you which is irritating."

There's also competition from what Dave describes as every 'Tom, Dick and Harry', with off-the-shelf street amplifiers getting more powerful... "I play guitar, vocal and drum through my fifty watt amplifier and if it goes beyond a certain level it doesn't sound very good, but now you've got guys with five hundred watt amplifiers who will just blow you off the street."

However, while music students and wannabe Ed Sheerans take to the streets, and the Buddy One Man Band appearance become less frequent, in the Bolton homes where Dave works, clients and staff are missing a rare treat...

"You are simply amazing" wrote one bloke in a YouTube comment "...you have the capacity to make me smile every time I listen to you..."

***To see Dave on YouTube search Buddy One Man Band or start with these links <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U86FbV11-3k>**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QLwDJDWEVVQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zv-balk1GU>

Council and School Workers Pay 2023

No UNISON strike action this year – All members urged to prepare for 2024 pay campaign...

Between 23rd May and 4th July, UNISON held an industrial action ballot for council and school workers in England and Wales over pay. The results have been sent out to regions and branches who have been sharing the ballot results with members. As this was a ballot of 345,000 members working for more than 4,300 employers, the process of getting results out has been a complicated one.

Here in Bolton, stewards and activists on the ground have worked incredibly hard to encourage members to take part in UNISON's ballot. Branch Officers and Convenors wish to thank everyone who has played their part in this process.

The support during the ballot and pay campaign from UNISON members has been incredible. The turnout this year was a huge improvement on the 2021/22 industrial action ballot and that groundswell of feeling will only build as we continue to campaign on pay. Due to the Tory anti-trade union laws, we can only take industrial action against employers when we achieve a turnout of 50% or more (with a majority voting for action) and, unfortunately, while we passed this turnout threshold in a number of organisations, most of these were smaller workplaces. Given the legal restrictions that are in place from the Government, UNISON's Local

Government Committee has made the difficult decision that it would not be effective to ask members to take industrial action at the present time.

Despite this setback, UNISON will continue the process of talking to the other local government trade unions, GMB and Unite, in an effort to resolve this year's pay dispute to ensure that pay increases are in members' pockets as soon as possible.

While the decision not to take industrial action is disappointing, across the union there is a determination to continue the fight to improve the pay of council and schools workers. This work starts through building for the 2024 pay campaign with the aim of getting the level of turnout we need for strike action.

As a union, we have come a long way, locally regionally and nationally, but there is still lots more to do and everyone can play their part. The fight continues and together we will keep demanding fair pay for the vital work of our council and schools members.

Andrea Egan (Branch Secretary), Christine Collins (Assistant Branch Secretary), Phil Chanin (Branch Chairperson)

Chancellor Now Aware of Mileage Rates Rip-off

Earlier this year, Bolton South East MP, Yasmin Qureshi, wrote to Chancellor, Jeremy Hunt about how public sector workers are getting screwed for using their cars...

"Dear Mr Hunt,

Recent research by UNISON and the RAC has found that public sector workers are missing out on thousands of pounds due to the Government's failure to update mileage rates. The research found that staff who need to drive for work are up to £6,000 out of pocket due to a decade long failure to increase mileage rates from 45p. These workers include District Nurses and Care Workers.

During a cost of living crisis which has included a period where petrol prices increased in many places to 190p a litre, it cannot be right that workers have had to absorb these costs. The report highlights that if the rate kept up with prices, it would now sit somewhere in the region of 63.4p per mile.

I would be grateful if you could outline the Government's views on this study and what plans you have to help workers who have no choice but to drive for work..."

UNISON Bolton Celebrates Support Staff In Schools

In November, UNISON is having a celebration of school support staff and everyone should get involved...

Stars In Our Schools is a celebration of school support staff, and UNISON has organised the day to celebrate the wonderful work they do every day and to make sure the world knows just how vital they are to children's education.

On Friday 24th November schools across the UK will be holding celebrations, putting on special assemblies, holding tea parties and even dressing up as superheroes to thank the support staff for what they do. It's an event for

staff, children, parents, carers, grandparents, teachers and head teachers, as well as the support staff themselves.

If you are a school support staff member and want to get involved I am happy to support you. If you are a parent or grandparent of a child at a school in Bolton please encourage your school to take part.

Please contact me on 01204 338907 for any further information..
Lauren Alergant, Schools Convenor

DRIVE UP OUR MILEAGE RATES

Many Local Government workers rely on their own car to enable them to do their job, sometimes driving hundreds of miles every day.

Many workers have to find the money to pay for their fuel out of their own pocket and then claim this back from their employer. This puts added pressure on workers personal finances which are currently under immense strain from the cost of living crisis.

TELL YOUR MP TO INCREASE MILEAGE RATES

Take 30 seconds to help us get the message to your MP by following the below link or scan the QR code.



SCAN ME

Post below URL into browser
<http://bit.ly/3lt9mYy>



Heaton Fold Garden Centre

A Beacon For In-Sourcing

The incredible success of Bolton Council's unique garden centre...

Stepping into Heaton Fold Garden Centre is almost like entering a theme park, with its Wild West town mock-up, a Japanese Garden complete with koi fish pond, a Caribbean style 'tiki' bar, and even a Beach Hut...

...Oh, and there's dozens and dozens of exotic flowers and plants, plus everything anyone could ever need in a garden, from tools to decorative pots and more. There's also a cafe and gift shop selling cards, candles and even a clothing range. The amazing thing is that this place is run by Bolton Council, and has social and environmental value budding out all over.

"We have fifty placements of adults with disabilities coming here across the week, growing things and keeping the place tidy" explains Heaton Fold manager Craig Brayshaw, who, with colleague Neil Wilcox has built the centre up zillions of notches since they arrived six years ago with the place in managed decline.

"The majority of customers come here knowing that when they spend

they are supporting these adults in a place like this" he enthuses "This adds value to the students' lives and their parents' lives, plus the huge satisfaction that we get out of it. And what a gem for the Council to have, knowing that we are looking after these adults with learning difficulties."

Meanwhile, the students have their own purpose built facilities added onto a huge greenhouse, including a pool table, kitchen and lounge area. The produce they grow, including tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers and lettuce, are all used in the cafe, while fifty per cent of the plants sold are grown on the premises, unlike most other garden centres that import all of their flora.

Heaton Fold has all this value, while still managing to compete with commercial garden centres in the area, as the one thing that is absent is owners creaming off the profits for their own wealth. Any surplus goes straight back into the enterprise to make it even bolder, brighter and a lot, lot bigger. It's a huge success story, with takings up by 270% since Craig and Neil arrived.



"If we can be some kind of platform for other services to look at, that would be great. But it doesn't come easy" Craig reflects "It takes an awful lot of work, the staffing has to be right, and you have to be able to love it and live it. We're not just nine-to-five. But we've given finance colleagues a lot of confidence so they've been able to invest extra capital to do what we've done."

Recently, using their past life as theatre technician for the Council, Craig and Neil have built from old

pallets and scrap wood a Wild West set, complete with bank, saloon, stocks and a Clint Eastwood-alike figure for kids to have their photo with. It's the centre for a twenty to thirty stall artisan market, which is held on the fourth Sunday of every month and has on offer everything from cheeses to jewellery.

They have also added a huge indoor structure selling top quality tools, solar lights and garden furniture, and there's plans for the gift shop near the cafe to double in size in the near



future to attract customers throughout the winter months. Yet when the pair arrived, the place was failing and maybe destined to be sold off to save Bolton Council money...

"We had twelve months to plug the £100,000 gap in funding from the Council, which we did" Craig recalls "We changed how the place looked visually, added fabulous stock, increased the quality of plants, and it started to attract people very, very

quickly."

The garden centre, in line with others, was first impacted by Covid, and, over the last eighteen months by the double whammy of increased energy bills and the cost of living crisis, but Craig is adamant that consumer confidence will return.

"We're very proud of what we've

done, and that the Council powers that be have been confident with us and helped us get to be where we need to be" he says "There's still a lot more challenges, particularly with the cost of living crisis, but hopefully that will get better as the months go on. We benchmark against our competitors, and there are some strong players in the field, so you've got to be on top of your game..."

Heaton Fold Garden Centre is certainly on top of its game, and shows what can be done away from private enterprise with its sole profit motives. Not only is the place stunning to experience, it's also stunning in its social and environmental ambitions. And more and more customers are starting to appreciate that. Although there's loads of flowers here, it's not just about bean counting...

Heaton Fold Garden Centre, is open Weekdays 9am to 4pm, and Weekends and bank holidays 10am to 4pm, with the Cafe open Wednesday to Sunday 10am to 3pm. Overdale Drive, Bolton BL1 5BU Phone 01204 336848 or Email: heaton.fold@bolton.gov.uk For lots more details see the website www.heatonfold.co.uk



'Lancastrians – mills, mines and minarets. A new history'

Here local historian Paul Salveson writes about his new book...

Bolton, and local government, feature strongly in my new book. 'Lancashire' is defined as the great region stretching from the Mersey to the Lakes, including towns like Bolton. The emphasis is on the people who made Lancashire, including the 'new Lancastrians' who have helped create a remarkably diverse and inclusive place. We have always been a region of migrants – from Flemish weavers in the 14th Century, to the Irish in the 19th century and more recently people from Eastern Europe, South Asia, the Middle East and Caribbean.

My book argues that the people of Lancashire have been progressively stripped of their identities and power, as local government was hollowed out and once powerful bodies – such as Lancashire County Council and the county boroughs like Bolton, had powers taken away. The historic county has been broken up; the year 1974 also saw many very effective local authorities (such as



Farnworth, Radcliffe, Heywood and many more) abolished, with precious little consultation amongst the communities affected.

My book is a plea for a 'new Lancashire' which restores its historic shape, as well as a celebration of its achievements in art, industry, sport and politics.

UNISON members can obtain the book at a 25% discount by going to www.hurstpublishers.com and entering the code LANCASTRIANS25.



Steve Rigby Retires

Bolton UNISON stewards and branch officers recently wished all the best to Steve Rigby on his retirement...

"Steve has been an active member, Branch Officer, Steward and Senior Steward for 26 years" says Janet Bryan, Bolton UNISON Convenor with Bolton at Home "A mainstay of Bolton at Home Stewards Committee, Steve has always been keenly aware of the importance of solidarity and noted for his compassion, kindness and dedication. His Grievance and Disciplinary packs in particular were things of beauty and remain an example to us all. A great collector of UNISON memorabilia, Steve's pride in the union and its members are evident to everyone

who knows him. Stewards will miss him, his knowledge and support. We wish him every happiness in his retirement."



How To Win At Work

A new book by Ian Allinson, UNISON member and trade union stalwart, shows everyone how to be victorious in disputes...

There's loads of 'How To' books on everything from *How To Drink Tea For Weight Loss*, to *How To Heal A Broken Heart*...but there's one self-help book that has something that everyone can grasp...*Workers Can Win! A Guide to Organising at Work*.

"I think there's a sizeable minority who recognise that if we want to have change to any of the social issues affecting people, we need to organise at work because that's a huge site of potential power for working people" author Ian Allinson explains "And if we neglect that, then everything else we do is really built on sand..."

Ian knows a thing or two about industrial strife as he led a number of disputes, including the first national strike in the overwhelmingly non-unionised IT industry in which he worked. He is currently a UNISON member and Industrial Action Solidarity Coordinator for Manchester Trades Council, which kind of says it all. He is also on the Trades Council Executive, did ten years on the Executive of AMICUS, and then Unite, and stood as a 'grass roots' candidate for General Secretary of Unite against Len McCluskey...

"It was certainly interesting and could get a bit heated but it was a useful thing to

do to shift some of the arguments in the union" Ian reflects. Indeed, he believes that as the wealth and power has been concentrated in fewer hands over the last decades, in that period, the unions themselves have stagnated...

"I think a lot of established trade unionists have got into a lot of bad habits" he says "We've had a long period where 'partnership trade unionism' has dominated; the idea that we have a shared interest with the boss. That's been pretty catastrophic. And then you've got whole generations of people who have grown up since the last big wave of unionisation and who have little or no experience of that collectivity. I think that's a huge problem."

On the positive side, Ian cites the growth of the climate and housing movements, those who were inspired by Jeremy Corbyn's Labour Party agenda, and recent industrial action where the workplaces weren't even unionised...

"We had sit-ins in various warehouses and canteens last year" he explains "In Bury, the Cranswick Continental Foods un-unionised food factory had a strike for several days. You had fifty different nationalities, shifts, high labour turnover and so on. I spoke to some of the workers who didn't know what a union was but

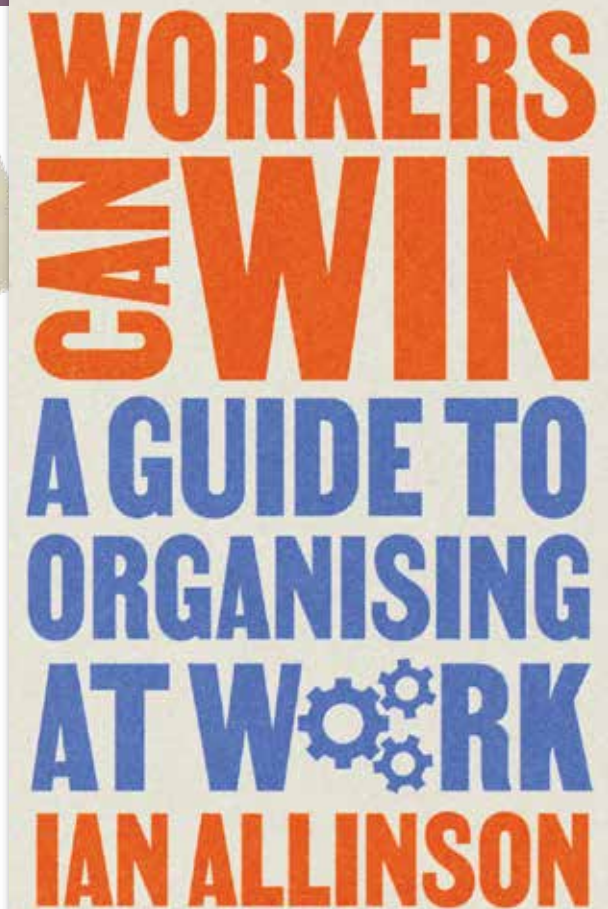


they managed to organise a strike anyway! That is absolutely inspirational. That gives us a clue that it is possible to turn it around, that it is not inevitable that workers get walked over."

There has also been a huge wave of strikes by well unionised workers, from bus drivers, to junior doctors and rail workers...

"It's amazing seeing so many people moving to action" says Ian "There's this shared common ground for over a decade, that people are thinking things are getting worse. It's a common context that's pushing people towards a sense of solidarity. If one group of workers wins it gives confidence and power to other groups of workers. Solidarity has become something that a lot more people are engaged in, going to picket lines, having a whip round, whatever it is; it's really encouraging."

Ian's book, with the optimistic title,



Workers Can Win!, has found favour with both old union heads and those who are new to unions and disputes, and it has already gone into two reprints...

John McDonnell, former Labour Party Shadow Chancellor, endorses the book, calling it an '*invaluable...essential guide to winning*' but away from big Politics, the book is for the grass roots of the workforce to make life better for themselves...

"Nobody else is going to do it for us is a really important message" Ian reflects "Where people are union members but don't stick together and don't have



Review: Workers Can Win: A Guide To Organising At Work by Ian Allinson

With threats to reasonable pay and conditions for workers everywhere, members are choosing to take action, and in this book, Ian shares his knowledge and experience to help workers organise and bring about positive change.

Its focus is on building unions by engaging members on issues that matter to them. Members decide what they want to do and take action by campaigning, negotiating and utilising their power to change working conditions.

He discusses practical techniques, analysing the theory and politics of organising and unions - a stark reminder of the power held by workers with over six million in trade unions today. Topics covered range from choosing and communicating about issues, to planning action, to management mischief.

The various models used by unions are discussed - Servicing (where members receive benefits such as cheaper insurance) and Advocacy (where unions take on case work and assist individuals). Both models are limited in their impact for workers, as they rely heavily on what the union can do for you.

The Organising model means workers can achieve much more working together. Union members can be involved in different ways that are manageable to them - by becoming a workplace contact, arranging petitions, mapping a department (listing who does what and if they are a union member), attending union meetings or joining black members/women's groups. The list goes on...

The book takes you through from becoming an activist to gaining big wins by listening to work colleagues, gaining allies and building resources, skills and support. The last few chapters also cover the problems you can come across. A great book for active members, stewards and officers. It's also great as a starting point to bring about positive change for workers.

Cat Woodall-Crook

solidarity, the boss gets away with murder. So even where we've got union membership, we've got a job to do to turn that into a powerful collective force that can actually bring change."

This self-help guide can be a very handy tool. Oh, and there's even a t-shirt to show you mean business...

Workers Can Win! A Guide to Organising At Work, is published by Pluto Press £14.99 (paperback) or £9.99 for the ebook.

For lots more details see <https://workers-can-win.info/>

"Just at the time when workers are mobilising to tackle the economic and climate crises we all face, this invaluable handbook comes along to provide an essential guide to winning."

John McDonnell MP

Bolton AGM Celebrates 30 Years

In March, UNISON held its packed Annual General Meeting at Bolton Town Hall, which included a rousing reception for Eileen Turnbull from the Shrewsbury 24 Campaign, a virtual appearance by UNISON President and Bolton branch stalwart, Andrea Egan, tributes for retiring Acting Branch Secretary, Jayne Clarke, and lots of 30 Years celebration cakes...

Here's why branch members think it's important and fun to attend the AGM...



"I think we have an important role in supporting those still actively in work, union reps and the union generally. We come to the AGM to stay on top of what's happening, what's relevant and how we can help by setting up our own campaigns, or maybe just standing on picket lines or writing letters..."
Rosie Adamson Clarke
retired member

"I think it's really good that stewards can actually come together and listen to the broader issues in the union. It's important to support everybody and the solidarity that you get from it. Because we've retired we haven't expired; we're still battling and following campaigns, and have set up our own campaigns, so the AGM is very important for us to share that expertise with stewards."
Florence Hill *ex branch chair retired member and former Education convenor...*



"I think it's nice to get a catch up with members, there's stalls and they always do a lovely buffet which is a bonus! It gives us the opportunity to find out what UNISON has done all year to support our colleagues, and the success stories..."
Anne Marie Holt



"I think it's important because we have to stand up for our rights and what's fair, and it's important to group together and support each other and make our voices known." **Chantelle Walker**

"I come as a retired member; it's a one off payment, it lasts a lifetime and I still enjoy the benefits of what the union can offer. It's really good to see old work colleagues and it's a way of keeping in touch as well." **Anne Parker**



"This is my first year of being in a union and my first AGM. I think it's one of the few chances to connect with the union and see what's going on and what's coming up." **Mohammed Hanif**



"People need to come to the AGM because this country needs unions desperately, and every year you go to an AGM to get quorate and it's the right thing to do. There's also a good buffet and a chance to win something in the raffle. But all in all, it's for the union." **Terrence Clarke**



"I haven't missed a UNISON AGM since I joined Bolton UNISON in 1993 when I qualified as a social worker. It's an event now – we've got stalls, we've got speakers, it's a great atmosphere and a good chance to meet up with colleagues and keep up to date with what's happening in the branch." **Martin Challender**



"I think people need to come to the AGM because they're part of the union, it's not just stewards and the branch officers. They need to come so they can have their say, find out what's going on and feel part of it because we are an organising union not a servicing union. Our NEC members in London are working hard to make it more involved for members. I've seen quite a few faces that I've not seen for a long time, so it's also good as a social event." **Jayne Clarke, Acting branch secretary**



"You're updated and you know what's going on. It might be only once a year you see each other so it's the social aspect as well." **Jag Rosia**



"It's important because people get to see faces they've not met before, plus they get an update on what's happening and you can keep in touch with what the union is doing." **Julie Tudor**



"It is my first AGM and I've come because I got involved in the Black Members Group, went to the UNISON conference and got to learn a lot more about UNISON and the work that it does. I'm really passionate about activism work, so I'm really excited to see what this AGM is all about and it's the 30 years of UNISON so it's really exciting to connect with more people." **Shaheen Mogradia**

"It's important to show solidarity with all members of the union. We're part of the Black Members Self Organised Group and are here en mass. We're like a core group who just want to get more black members active and to be put on the agenda with other equalities strands. I've just bumped into a black member who didn't even know there was a Black Members Self Organised Group..." **Ibrahim Kala**



"It's good to touch base with people. Myself and Julie work at Bolton Cares and you can feel quite isolated, so it's nice to see friends and colleagues from the Council and really feel a part of something that is so important to us. It just reminds you of what you belong to. I came to Bolton Council in 1990 when it was NUPE and NALGO and I remember the amalgamation; it's just really took me back...30 years!" **Sue McGlory**

"I've come to the AGM today because I've been a paying member of UNISON for many years, quite recently got involved in the Black Members Self Organised Group and my activism has sort of grown. I realised that I had been paying my subs for many years and never participated as a member in the AGM, and that I needed to become more active in the process, hear what's going on and support others in solidarity. It was good particularly seeing some of the old members like Florence and Bernie because I remember them from thirty years ago when I first came to the Council. We need to encourage more members to get involved in UNISON, particularly more black workers and that's what I'm here to do over the next couple of years. There's a movement that's here for us as well..." **Maureen Nevers**



Bolton AGM Celebrates 30 Years

Horwich Repair Café

An exciting new cafe has opened where you can bring in anything for repair...

Bolton social worker and UNISON Steward, Anne Lee, is chair of a thriving local group determined to bring people together in an effort to repair things that become damaged or broken rather than simply throw them away.

“Horwich Repair Café is a free meeting place where people can bring things to be repaired by volunteers in their local community” explains Anne “This can include clothes, small electricals, bikes, toys...Our aims are to reduce waste, share skills, save people money, and create a more sustainable society.

“We are part of a movement of over two thousand Repair Cafés worldwide” she adds “Some of the benefits, other than reducing waste, come from the connection between members of a community. Those involved have told us they feel a sense of achievement as repairers, they have learnt and shared skills, made new friends and feel even more connected with their community.”

Horwich Repair Café meets on the third Saturday of each month at



Brazley Community Centre, which has level access and Wi-Fi. The centre is near local bus routes and has car parking facilities.

Salford UNISON Reps Elected As Vice Presidents...

UNISON's newly elected National Executive Council (NEC) convened for the first time in June, at the end of national delegate conference in Liverpool, to elect a new presidential team.

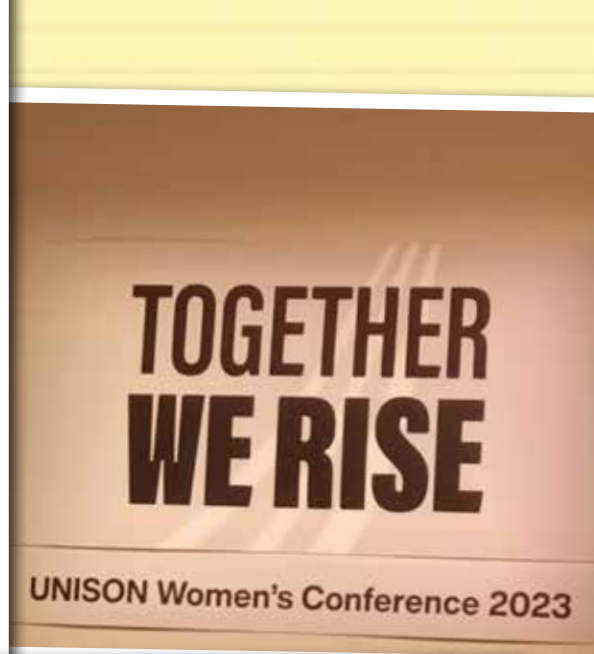
The council elected Libby Nolan, of Swansea Bay Healthcare Branch in Wales, as President, with Steve North of Salford Local Government Branch and Julia Mwaluke, also from Salford City Local Government Branch, as vice presidents.

“We’re hoping to build on the fantastic work of the previous Presidential Team” say Steve and Julia “UNISON has tremendous potential but we can only realise it if we pull together all parts of our union. We have some great examples of branch and regional successes, but we’re struggling to win on a national scale because we aren’t currently dedicating sufficient resources to organising and winning disputes.

“We need an agenda that empowers workers by bringing them together collectively, providing them with the resources they need to win and then spreading those victories” they add “We’ve seen this work in the North West in social care. What started as disputes in one or two branches over pay are now

regional campaigns that work, spreading pay increases to thousands of workers and building a new layer of activists. The same is happening with our work in increasing pay for Health Care Assistants and our work in schools and academies. We’ve seen entire branches revitalised through a committed and properly resourced approach to building collective power. That is the future of our union and that’s what we’re excited to develop.

“We also want to properly embed UNISON’s commitment to equalities” they explain “Our union has a proud history of self-organisation for Women, Black, Disabled and LGBT+ members and now we are seeing our young members really assert their voices. Organising has to be inclusive or it won’t work in genuinely transforming workplaces and communities throughout the UK. So we want a powerful, inclusive union with a bold agenda of delivering power and dignity for working people... and we’ll work with anyone who is committed to that goal!”



Women's Conference Bournemouth 2023

Christine Collins and Diane Rowson report from UNISON's National Women's Conference...

I attended Women's Conference in Bournemouth this year for the first time. After hearing some of the speakers it's still very apparent that there is a long way to go in the fight for equality. I think it's important to get more young women involved in this fight, they are the future we are fighting for.

We need to also look at the way a lot of our women are being treated by men in the workplace. Our women need to feel supported when issues arise. They need to know where to go for this help and support. I thought that the confidence the speakers showed, even when they were sharing personal experiences, was inspiring.

I hope some of the issues raised at this year's Conference are not on the agenda for next year and that more of our young women join the fight to improve the lives of each and every one of us...

Diane Rowson, first time delegate to Women's Conference

National Women's Conference was thought provoking and emotionally charged for good and bad reasons. As women, we have achieved so much within our history, but there is still so much more we need to achieve...

Many important motions were heard around sexual harassment policies, the cost-of-living crisis and its impact on women, and to support and encourage more women to become active, especially low paid women. There were also motions on the gender pay gap, attacks on women's human rights, menstrual health, period poverty, menopause, work towards an all women Health Strategy...the list goes on. But now the National Women's Committee and the union's NEC will work to progress the carried motions and feed back at Women's Conference in 2024.

It's important in a union that has seventy per cent women members that we encourage, support and mentor our

women members locally to get involved and be active, not just at a local level, but regionally and nationally, because women working together are a very powerful force that can achieve so much.

I am the branch Women's Officer and started as a steward, but through being more involved and engaged with my union I was supported, offered training and have learned and achieved so much in just a little time. I attend the North West Regional Women's Committee, which any woman member can attend, and they offer Hybrid so everyone can be involved. I was encouraged to step up as co-chair and help lead on the regional Women's Committee work plan.

The Committee has achieved and delivered so much. It was asked to run a workshop on Domestic Abuse at Women's Conference, which was very well attended with over eighty people, and the feedback was positive. It's a massive topic and we need to give it more time, and possibly run full

day seminars to enable everyone to participate.

Christine Collins Women's Officer

For more information on the being involved in the Women's Committee contact the branch – details below.

Any women member can attend Conference. UNISON provides accommodation, travel and expenses to help women, especially the low paid, to be able to become more involved.

If this is something you would be interested in, please contact the branch on 01204 338901 or email admin@unisonbolton.org

For more information on the UNISON Women's Conference see the reports on the national website – start here www.unison.org.uk/news/2023/02/unison-urges-better-protection-for-domestic-abuse-victims/

No Divide And Rule!

With politicians and the far right stoking up fear, trade unionists unite in solidarity with refugees...

Back in March, BBC bosses first suspended then reinstated Gary Lineker who had tweeted his support for refugees, highlighting what he felt was “An immeasurably cruel policy directed at the most vulnerable people in language that is not dissimilar to that used by Germany in the 30s.”

The suspension of Gary Lineker over his criticism of the Government took place against a background of rising hostility and racism. Bolton’s Andrea Egan, then UNISON’s National President, signed a public statement circulated by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) that still holds true, as the hate debate is still headline news...

“In recent weeks, we have seen an alarming rise in violence and intimidation organised by the far right against refugees and refugee accommodation. The Government is complicit in these attacks. The Rwanda policy does not make sense

as a means of stopping small boat crossings – and it is failing on its own terms – but it fits with a long-running campaign of rhetoric and demonisation.

“Anti-migrant politics are an attempt to divide working class people against each other. In the past decade, the UK has suffered a crisis of living standards – with wages falling and public services left to rot. The people to blame for this are politicians, billionaires and big corporations, not migrant workers or refugees forced to live in temporary accommodation. The anti-refugee campaign offers no solutions to the real problems faced by the deprived communities they are often targeting. The answer is solidarity, not scapegoating.

As trade unionists, we know whose side we are on when we see far right mobs attacking refugees and politicians playing the mood music. We send our solidarity to Care4Calais and all groups fighting for refugee rights, and we support the call for safe and legal routes into the UK. We call on workers and trade union members to show their solidarity and to mobilise against the far right...”

Signed
Matt Wrack – FBU General Secretary
Sharon Graham - UNITE General Secretary



- Gary Smith – GMB General Secretary
- Andrea Egan – UNISON President
- Mary Bousted and Kevin Courtney – NEU Joint General Secretaries
- Mick Lynch – RMT General Secretary
- Jo Grady – UCU General Secretary
- Mark Serwotka - PCS General Secretary
- Michelle Stanistreet – NUJ General Secretary
- Mick Whelan – ASLEF General Secretary
- Sarah Woolley – BFAWU General Secretary
- Paul W Fleming – EQUITY General Secretary
- Julia Georgiou - NHBC Staff Association General Secretary
- Naomi Pohl – MU (Musicians’ Union) General Secretary
- Steve Gillan – POA General Secretary
- Rob Monks – URTU General Secretary

Some Facts About Migration...

1. When comparing the number of applications for asylum based on population size in 2021, the University of Oxford’s Migration Observatory shows the UK has one of the lowest rates, having received 8.4 per 10,000 people, ranking 19th overall in Europe. Cyprus, received 152.6 applications per 10,000 people, followed by Austria (43.3), Malta (29.4), Greece (26.6), Slovenia (25.1), Liechtenstein (24.3), Iceland (23.6), Germany (22.9), France (17.8), Spain (13.8) and Italy (9).
2. Germany is the top country in Europe, granting asylum-related protection to about 60,000 people, followed by France with nearly 34,000, Italy with more than 21,800, Spain with about 20,400 and Greece with 16,570, while the UK granted asylum or protection to 13,000 people.
3. Around 73% of refugees around the world live in countries neighbouring their own, according to the United Nations Refugee Council, which adds that the vast majority of refugees globally – 4 out of 5 – ‘stay in their region of displacement, and consequently are hosted by developing countries’. Turkey now hosts the highest number of refugees with 3.7 million.

Source: I News Fact Check. The figures above exclude Ukrainian refugees.





Never Again - Holocaust Study Tour 2023

Cat Woodall-Crook experiences the horrors, from Auschwitz-Birkenau to Schindler's former factory...

UNISON North West runs an annual Holocaust Study Tour for activists and members. This study tour to Poland is an opportunity for trade unionists to learn and reflect on the terrible events that occurred under Nazi rule, helping to support union work intended to tackle racism and bigotry in the workplace and wider society.

Cat Woodall-Crook, who works for Bolton at Home and is a committed UNISON activist, recalls taking part in this year's Holocaust Study Tour last March .

"I wanted to pay my respects to those murdered, but I also wanted to learn more about the atrocities that happened and how they were allowed to happen" she explains "In the run up

to the tour, I felt nervous, unsure how I might be affected which felt quite selfish. Talking to others beforehand generated very different views. Some said they wouldn't go, out of fear that it would be too upsetting, some were interested in going themselves, while others couldn't understand why I wanted to go at all."

"In Krakow we learned about the Nazi invasion of the city, visiting the remains of the walled ghetto where Jewish people were forced to live" she adds "We went to the former factory of Oskar Schindler, the German businessman credited with saving the lives of 1,200 Jewish employees; a story made famous by the film *Schindler's List*. Today, the factory is a museum highlighting the suffering and brutality experienced by Jewish people and non-



Jewish people under the Nazis.

"On our visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau, we went through airport style security to protect the site from vandals and right-wing extremists" Cat says "We entered the courtyard beneath the notorious sign, '*Arbeit Macht Frei*' meaning, '*Work Sets You Free*', which stands across the entrance. On a clear sunny day, the first thing I noticed was birds singing, with lots of people stood chatting waiting for their tour to begin."

"Places like Auschwitz stand as memorials to all those who perished. They are evidence of mass torture, starvation, medical experiments, and murder because of an extremist ideology" she concludes "As

ridiculous as it seems to anyone with intelligence, holocaust deniers and hateful ideologies continue to exist. Much of what we observed felt very uncomfortable and intrusive. The tour was emotional and at times overwhelming. I learned a lot and met some lovely people. The tour was a very real history lesson about the atrocities of the past. We must always remember the horror of the Nazis, we must always say 'Never again!' to the politics of hate."

It's intended that a longer version of Cat's Report will be available on the Bolton UNISON Website and included in the 2024 Branch AGM Papers.

BOLTON UNISON NEWS



Well Done Benjamin Court Workers!

Accommodation Support Workers get upgrades...

Accommodation Support Workers at Benjamin Court do a vital job providing temporary accommodation for people who are homeless and vulnerable. For some time the workers had felt undervalued, so they approached the union to help with their re-grading appeal.

With the support of UNISON Branch Chair, Phil Chanin, the workers concerned, Sharon McLachlan, Gillian Holden, Julie Riddle, Natalie Greenall and Carmel

Dunphy, were successfully re-graded in April; they have now all been moved up from grade E to F. Increased recognition for Benjamin Court staff didn't stop there though, the workers were also nominated in the Bolton Best Awards this year, for the Leader and Chief Executive's Award, losing out to Bolton's Winter Service Team, otherwise known as 'The Gritters'.

On behalf of all the UNISON members involved in the grading appeal, Sharon McLachlan says "We would just like to say thank you to Phil for all his help in being awarded our re-grade".

Celebrating Black History

Black History Month Sees Resistance Theme

In October Bolton will be celebrating Black History Month, and it's anticipated that there will be numerous local events including, films, talks and live music involving Bolton Library and Museum Service, Bolton Black History Group and Bolton African Caribbean Association amongst others.

The national 2023 Black History Month theme is *Celebrating our Sisters, Saluting our Sisters, and Honouring Matriarchs of Movements*. This year has already seen a series of events to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Windrush and a generation of people who travelled from the Caribbean to settle here in the UK.

The HMT Empire Windrush was the famous ship that docked in Tilbury on 22nd June 1948, bringing workers from Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and other islands, to help fill post-war UK labour shortages. Since then, the name Windrush has come to represent those who settled in the UK from the Caribbean between

1948 and 1971.

The Windrush Generation are recognised today as people who set up home and raised families, building a permanent legacy in British history. Their lives are stories of resilience and survival, often in the face of hostility and racism. In 2018, the UK saw a massive Windrush scandal, with hundreds told they were in the UK illegally, despite living, working and paying taxes for decades. Numerous people were wrongly detained, deported and denied their legal rights. Ultimately the scandal led to an official apology from the Government, and the resignation of the Home Secretary, Amber Rudd.

Although an official compensation scheme was launched, analysis earlier this year showed that many individuals and families had been waiting months for compensation – with just a fraction of those entitled receiving any form of payment. The scandal continues with many people still fighting for justice.

For full listings see the website www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk

150 Years of Bolton Town Hall

Martin Challender celebrates the town's most iconic building...

This year marks the 150th anniversary of Bolton Town Hall in Victoria Square. It may seem incredible today, but back in the early 1870s, Bolton, Manchester and surrounding Lancashire towns were responsible for 32% of global cotton production. Cotton was a brutal trade that had developed on the backs of exploited mill workers at home and exploited (but also enslaved) cotton pickers abroad.

As Lancashire mill owners built wealth (for themselves at least), cotton workers built trade unions to improve their pay and conditions. When Bolton's population and overall prosperity grew in the 19th century,

so did ideas of civic pride, with increased demands for libraries, public parks and other amenities. Local business and political leaders were determined to have an iconic civic building to serve Bolton's needs and act as a symbol of confidence in the town's future.

Designs, by William Hill of Leeds and George Woodhouse of Bolton, were based on a scaled down version of Leeds Town Hall. Bolton Town Hall was opened by the Prince of Wales on 4th June 1873. Final construction costs came to £167,000 (equivalent to £15.7million in 2021), more than double original estimates. On completion it was the most expensive town hall built up to that time. Bolton Town Hall has been designated a Grade II listed building by English Heritage.



Chris Peachey Marathon Man!

Bolton UNISON member runs for cancer charity...

Bolton Social Worker and UNISON Member, Chris Peachey, is a keen runner who has successfully completed numerous runs including five marathons. In April, Chris ran the London Marathon where he raised around £300 in aid of Cancer Research UK.

"I wanted to run on behalf of Cancer Research after losing a couple of family members in

recent years as well as losing work colleagues" Chris explains "We all know that cancer is such a terrible illness, I'm just really grateful to everyone who has been able to make a donation."

Chris is active member of Manchester based club, Chorlton Runners, which claims to be the 'Friendliest running club in the North West'. If you are looking to join a running club in Manchester, you can find out more at www.chorltonrunners.co.uk

Bolton's Christine Elected To Union's National Executive.

Christine Collins has been elected to UNISON's NEC

Earlier this year, UNISON held elections to the union's National Executive Committee (NEC) and in June it was announced that Bolton's Christine Collins was amongst those elected.

Christine will serve on the union's national body, alongside existing NEC member, Bolton Branch Secretary, Andrea Egan, who has reached the end of her term as UNISON National President.

"I'm delighted to have been elected and have the opportunity to represent the interests

of union members at a national level" says Christine "Public service workers face huge pressures due to 13 years of Government austerity and a cost-of-living crisis they simply didn't create.

"More than ever we need a strong and effective union to face the challenges of the 21st Century for the sake of our public services and future generations" she adds "Whether it's fighting to secure back pay or campaigning to defend our rights at work, I know that together we can make a real difference. I have been amazed at the fantastic support I have received, not just from our branch but across the North West region. I just want to say a massive thanks to everyone..."

Local Election Saw UNISON Member Elected to Council

Well Done Bolton at Home's Councillor Kate!

Bolton UNISON member, Kate Taylor, a Governance Officer with Bolton at Home, was elected to Bolton Council in this year's local elections in May.

Due to local boundary changes these were 'all out' elections, with all sixty seats being contested. As a Labour Party candidate in Astley Bridge, Kate received 1,613 votes,



enough to beat one of her Conservative rivals. The other Labour candidates in Astley Bridge narrowly missed out.

"I am really proud to have been elected" says Kate "It's an honour to be able to represent the people of Astley Bridge."

Elsewhere in Bolton, other Labour candidates also made gains, enough for Labour's Nick Peel to become Bolton's Council Leader, replacing the previous Council Leader, Conservative Councillor, Martyn Cox.

Cinderella Comes To UNISON...Oh Yes She Does!

It's soon time for reduced price panto tickets...

Bolton branch always buys out a whole matinee performance of the December pantomime at the Albert Halls in Bolton Town Centre, and tickets are sold to Bolton UNISON members at a discounted rate.

This year, it's the uplifting, could-be-true story of Cinderella; the epic tale of a prince, a fairy,

some ugly sisters and a pretty maiden who sweeps a lot...it's sadder than thaaat...

The UNISON panto day is on Sunday 10th December at 1:30pm, and tickets will be on sale at £7.50 each, with a maximum of five per member (pay by cash, card or cheque). They go on sale Saturday 7th October 10am-1pm at The Hub, Bold Street, BL1 1LS, and Monday 9th October 8am-11am Castle Hill Centre, Castleton Street BL2 2JW.

there
for you

supporting UNISON members
when life gets tough

- Financial assistance
- Debt advice
- Wellbeing breaks
- Support and information



If you are a UNISON member struggling through an unexpected crisis **There for You** is here to help

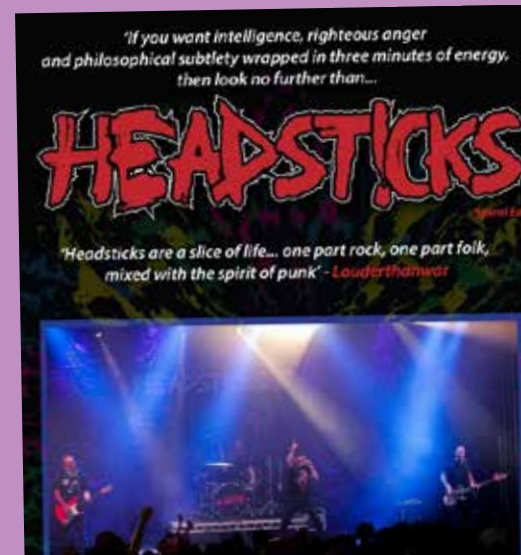
Speak to your branch welfare officer or call **020 7121 5620**

For immediate debt advice call **0800 389 3302**

www.unison.org.uk/thereforyou

UNISON
the public service union

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Wigan Diggers Festival Brings Free Grass Roots Fun

Wigan is the place to be this September when the 13th annual free Wigan Diggers' Festival happens...

The Wigan Diggers' Festival happens in the open air every year at The Wiend in the town centre and celebrates, via poetry, music, song, film and a range of other activities, the life and ideas of Wigan's Gerrard Winstanley (1609-1676) and the 17th Century Diggers movement he inspired.

Also known as the True Levellers, the Diggers were one of the first truly egalitarian political movements of the poor and property-less anywhere in the world, and the first to argue for full equality of men and women. They and Winstanley famously asserted: 'The world was made a common treasury for all! ...

The 13th Wigan Diggers' Festival will take place on Saturday 9th September and this year's headliners are Headsticks with their revolutionary punk roots rock'n'roll.

The full line up is...

Main Stage: Headsticks, McHale's Permanent Brew, Jess Silk, Bard Company, Commoners Choir, More Than Words, Carol Hodge Band, Fine Lines and TicNoToc

Song and Story Stage: Steam Town, John D Revelator, Vision Thing, Stephen Smith, HazJak Poets (George Melling, Jimmy Andrex and Carla Mellor), Cobalt Tales and Martin Purdey (Harp and Monkey).

For full details see <https://wigidiggersfestival.org/>

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BOLTON UNISON

BRANCH CONTACTS

Music Quiz - Ten mystery prizes to be won!

UNISON was founded in 1993 – do you know who recorded these famous hits of that year?

1. **Moving On Up**
2. **Dreams**
3. **Oh Carolina**
4. **Go West**
5. **What's Up?**
6. **Everybody Hurts**
7. **Ordinary World**



To enter simply fill in the names of the artists and post your entry to: Music Quiz, Bolton UNISON, c/o CVS, The Hub, Bold Street, BL1 1LS

Alternatively photograph this completed page and email to: admin@unisonbolton.org Please put Music Quiz in the subject field.

Name:

Address:

Job title:

Workplace:

Email:

All correct entries from branch members received within a month of the magazine being posted out will be put in a prize draw. Ten lucky members will win a mystery prize. Please note that details received will be used to check/update your membership records. Winners will be notified directly. The correct answers and list of winners will be posted on the branch website. One entry per member.

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UNISON

**Together we can build a stronger
and more effective union.**

**Why not ask colleagues, family members and
friends if they are UNISON members?**

Joining online has become easier than ever!

**People can join UNISON by
phone with the QR code...**



**Don't forget that apprentices and students
can join UNISON for just £10 a year!**