

Charlton Park Academy out on strike!



OUR MEMBERS OUT IN FORCE ON THE PICKET LINE

GMB members at Charlton Park Academy School in Greenwich have been taking strike action over new imposed sick pay arrangements which leave members on much worse terms and conditions than any other Greenwich school.

The dispute has since been settled, with the headteacher having to cede ground to our demands on sick pay. Well done to all involved and thanks to GMB General Secretary Tim Roache, Matthew Pennycook MP, parents and local residents for their invaluable support.

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- Dispute with Headteacher of Swindon school
- MayBots at the National Pay Pinch Demo
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Thames Water Pensions under threat

Thames Water's Pension scheme is under threat of closure, despite bosses sharing £100 million of bonuses between them, after being fined £20 million for water leaks.

GMB oppose this, so watch out in future editions of Southern Region News to see how this story develops!

Message from the Regional Secretary

Welcome to the first edition of Southern Region News! The aim of this publication is to keep members updated on the regular activities all around the region. We will be relying on members, branches and activists to submit articles to us for inclusion, so see the back page for how to do this.

GMB Southern Region continues to go from strength to strength and remains one of the most prosperous regions within the Union, all this despite the difficulties we face from austerity, privatisation and anti-Trade Union legislation. This is all due to the hard work of our activists and members, so a big thank you and a big well done to all.

May I take this opportunity to wish you and your families well for a happy and prosperous 2018.



UBER takes another GMB beating

The employment appeals Tribunal has found in GMB's favour once again, when we argued that Uber drivers are in fact workers, rather than self-employed. This means that under EU law, they are entitled to Living Wage pay, as well as statutory annual leave and other basic provisions we all get as UK workers. Uber keep coming back, and GMB keeps on defeating them in court.

SGN Workers reject Pay Deal

The GMB having been in pay negotiations with SGN and could only reach a "the best we could achieve" which did not come anywhere near our GMB members aspirations. It became very clear during the Pay Roadshows across Southern Region that the pay offer from SGN was not received well and was eventually rejected by members in a ballot.

The GMB have advised the employer of the results and as yet they have not come back to the GMB so as to return to the negotiations.

GMB members who work for SGN are very unhappy and feel totally undervalued, disappointed and disillusioned by the offer made from the employer. They feel their job, for industrials is a dangerous job and their primary role is to secure life and property. They work extremely long hours in order to receive an income to afford them a basic living and they are furious that SGN admit they do not pay well. The company has just paid Ofgem a figure of £85 million because of their profit margin.

QUIDS IN GMB members secure compensation

In 2017, GMB Southern Region secured more than £4 million in compensation for our members, thanks to our in-house law firm, Unionline.

Unionline will handle any claim you may have, from an accident inside or outside of work, to a claim for Unfair Dismissal in an Employment Tribunal, to representation at a Police Station if you are interviewed.

You can contact them on 0300 333 0303, where you need to quote your GMB membership number to be put through to an advisor. If you have a matter affecting you for which you would like some legal advice, why not give them a call?

GMB Launch education campaign in Graham Care

This is an exciting new initiative in conjunction with our Education department.

We have a lot of migrant worker members who will benefit from undertaking some English as a second language courses.

This will both help the employer and our members, many of whom have come from overseas with the restraints that come with not fully understanding the language.

If a course like this would be useful for you, please contact the Education department at our Chessington Office to find out more!

GMB Retired Members

GMB's Retired Members Association is a nationwide movement who look after the interests of retired members and pensioners up and down the country.

On a regional level, our association is chaired by Derrick Baker, who then feeds back to the National group.

If you have anything to report to Derrick, please let your Branch Secretary know, and encourage them to engage with the group.



ISS DAY OF ACTION

Santa Pigs highlight ISSues at South London Hospitals

Across 5 hospitals in South London, many workers are employed by ISS, a £9 billion global outsourcing giant, as hospital cleaning, portering and security staff. In some cases, ISS are using what they call casual worker agreements and sometimes pay as low as £7.88 an hour.

Members have reported a manager saying he didn't care about the patients - they don't make him any money and all he cares about is making money, as well as cleaners being followed to the toilet by

supervisors demanding to know where they are going and why they have stopped working.

We will be updating our Facebook and Twitter with news on this story, so make you like, follow and subscribe!



TOLPUDDLE FESTIVAL

GMB Field 2018

Once again, in 2017 GMB Southern Region organised a field at the Tolpuddle Festival, where members were able to meet, chat, enjoy entertainment and camp for a full week in the run up to the festival.

Young members were also encouraged to attend a political school, where they could learn all about the Tolpuddle Martyrs and the history of the Trade Union movement.

Special thanks must go to the local reps and retired members for all your help at the GMB Field.

We look forward to seeing you next year, with the festival taking place from Friday 20th to Sunday 22nd July 2018.



GMB prioritise health and safety in SECAMB

Health and Safety issues are being reported to us on a daily basis and whilst some matters have been resolved there is a severe issue with general safety throughout the sites that have been visited so far. Whilst GMB continues to raise concerns and urgent matters with local and higher management our health and safety reps are being met with resistance and a bewildering lack of reporting structures in this regard. GMB will continue to have an uphill fight against this approach, a fight that we are more than willing to commit to in order to ensure that staff are safe at work.

Political Successes

GMB Southern Region now have 14 Members of Parliament elected, thanks to the hard work of many campaigners in the run up to last summer's General Election.

These people come from a number of backgrounds but will be working hard over their term to look after ordinary working people.

So could you be the next?

If you are interested in standing at the next General Election with GMB's backing, please contact Michelle Gordon, our Regional Political Officer to find out more.

2018 is still an important year politically, with many local and district elections taking place throughout Southern Region.

There is still time to put your name forward if you are interested, so let us know if you want any more information.

Equally, our candidates always need support, and our region will be organising campaigning days to help get the vote out. If you can spare any time, whether to deliver leaflets, knock on doors or make a few phone calls, please do get in touch!

GMB MayBots Protest the Public Sector Pay Pinch

GMB members from across the country stole the show at the TUC's recent Public Sector Pay Pinch demonstration in London. As well as the MayBots (pictured), members were also accompanied by a giant "pinching" hand.

Speaking at the rally, Tim Roache, General Secretary said, "For years, the Tories have told you that you don't deserve a pay rise.

"They've paid lip service to the vital work you do - looking after us when we're sick or in our older years, teaching our kids, putting your lives on the line in burning buildings and in the face of terrorist attacks - but that's all it is.

"Year on year some of the hardest working people on our front lines are seeing their pay cut - prices go up, wages don't.

"Public sector workers are being forced to go



GMB MAYBOTS READY TO MARCH ON WESTMINSTER

to food banks to eat. That is an absolute disgrace and it must stop.

"It's up to us to force this spiteful, wrongheaded and weak government to get their act together."

To find out more about GMB's Public Sector Pay Pinch campaign, visit www.paypinch.org

ASDA Membership at all-time high

Due to the hard work of Reps and Activists across the region, we have more members across more ASDA stores than ever before, now numbering almost 5,000.

There are active reps in most stores and almost 200 contacts all over the region. In fact, many stores and warehouses have their own dedicated branch, and this number is also increasing.

If you wish to find out more about becoming more involved in the union, about becoming a rep, about organising a workplace meeting or even about setting up a branch in your store or warehouse, get in contact with us and we'll point you in the right direction.

Swindon Headteacher summoned for assault

GMB Wiltshire and Swindon Branch have called for the School Governors and the Catholic Diocese of Salisbury to take responsibility after the Head teacher of Christ the King School in Amesbury is summoned for common assault.

This follows an incident in the School when a fire extinguisher was discharged, resulting in foam hitting the face of a Teaching Assistant, and despite a complaint being made, no action was taken.

GMB has vigorously campaigned to have the School take this incident seriously, and is extremely pleased that the incident is now being taken forward by the police. We hope that there have been lessons learned by the School, and that in future teaching assistants will be treated with the respect they deserve.

GMB Southern's new website is on its way! Our team are working hard to produce a new website which is easier to use and navigate around, so keep an eye out at www.gmb-southern.org.uk for it to go live early in 2018!

Do you have anything to contribute to our Regional Newsletter?

Send in any stories or photos to info@gmb.org.uk or look us up on Facebook or Twitter