



Branch Newsletter

**March
Issue No 50
2011**

Be there on the 26th

For those of you that may have already heard and more importantly, for those of you who might not have yet... The TUC are organising a march starting out from the Victoria Embankment in London and ending in Hyde Park on Saturday 26th March 2011 to protest against the cuts being proposed and / or made by the Government to public services.

The branch's members and activists are all invited, nay positively encouraged to come along and join the rest of us ambulance sorts within UNISON on the day. This includes our private ambulance, Healthcare Initial and call centre/ NHSD members as well because, lets face it the NHS is what we are all about- be that currently or in our previous lives ? ? There are coaches being laid on by various

branches and if you would like to secure a place on one then you can use the following link-<http://www.unisoneastern.org.uk/campaigns/cuts/tuc-march...26th march-2011.html> which will take you to the Unison Eastern regional page where contact numbers are listed for your information. If you give them a call and say that you're with East of England Ambulance branch then I'm sure they will find you a seat. For those of you who are not able to get a seat on the coach and who may be reliant on public transport instead, the branch committee has agreed that members will be able to claim your travel expenses back from the branch provided you submit them on a current branch expenses claim form (available on request) **AND** attach a receipt or the tickets to the form. It would also be good to gauge the level of interest as well as establish a meeting point where the East of England branch "posse" could meet up and I would therefore appreciate if you could confirm your intention to go.

I have ordered some campaign materials and also have some placards available if you would like to come up with something suitably artistic and apt to put on them; I personally intend fashioning a fabulous

"Blue Peter-esque" banner out of what looks like an extremely massive hankie and some broom handles!

We look forward to seeing loads of you there ??
Jackie Robinson Membership Officer

UNISON gearing up...

Public Services union UNISON has appointed five new assistant general secretaries to its Senior management team " to help the Union deal with the challenges of this Tory led government and its attacks on public services. They will cover organising and recruitment; bargaining, negotiating, and equalities, communications campaigns and policy; organisation and resource development; regional management and governance. E.M Comms



On the 26th march 2011, thousands of people will march for Public Services in London, to tell the Government that savage spending cuts are both unnecessary and unfair.

I'd like to invite you to join us on the TUC March.

When the Tory led government was elected, it promised us that it would protect front -line services, that it would protect the NHS, and that it would protect the most vulnerable in our society. But now 140.000 local government jobs are to go in England & Wales alone this year, 50.000 jobs will go in our NHS; Police staff roles are being cut and across the UK vital local services are being axed.

Inevitably those who lose out will be the vulnerable that the government vowed to protect. The impact on our communities could be devastating. Research shows that cuts to public services hit the poorest the hardest: services such as 'Surestart', giving our very youngest children a fair start in life; the education maintenance allowance that enabled the hundreds of thousands of young people to stay on in education; as well as pensions for low paid workers that are now coming under attack.



March for public services 26 March

On 26 March thousands of people from all over the UK will march in London to speak out against the government's savage and unfair spending cuts.

Join us with your colleagues, friends and family in speaking up for vital public services.

Register and find out more at unison.org.uk/26march

Join us in UNISON. Call 0845 355 0845 now, or visit unison.org.uk/join

a million voices for public services

Meanwhile, the bankers keep their bonuses, and their tax loopholes.

UNISON is speaking up for a fairer way, to protect your schools, your hospitals, your communities, your jobs, your Pensions. On March 26th we'll be marching for the Public Services that we hold dear.

Join us with your friends, your family and your colleagues. If you've never been on a march before then this is the one to come on. Find out more, and let us know that you are coming at - Unison.org.uk/26march
Dave Prentis General Secretary

Secretary's Corner– Final 2011

Dear Colleagues.

It is with regret and not without a degree of sadness that I write this as my final "Secretary's Corner" After many months of thought and soul searching, I have finally taken the decision to stand down from my position as Branch Secretary at this year's AGM on March 2nd. This has been a very difficult decision to make, but a new opportunity was advertised within the Trust and having applied and undertaken a rigorous selection and interview process, I have been fortunate to have been offered the post and the chance of a new challenge.

The e-mails that I have received recently and the feedback from station meetings has led me to believe that the members want a change in the leadership of the Branch, so I think the time is right. I have considered it a great honour, and a privilege to have served as Branch Secretary for this and the previous East Anglian Branch for the last 7 years, and as Branch Chair, and County Lead for Suffolk before that. I have never once shied away from the enormous responsibility that comes with the role, and I have always represented our members with passion, diligence, and my overriding principles of fairness.

We have not always got what we wanted and there have been times when we have had to compromise, but over the years we have won many concessions, put money in members pockets and saved jobs.

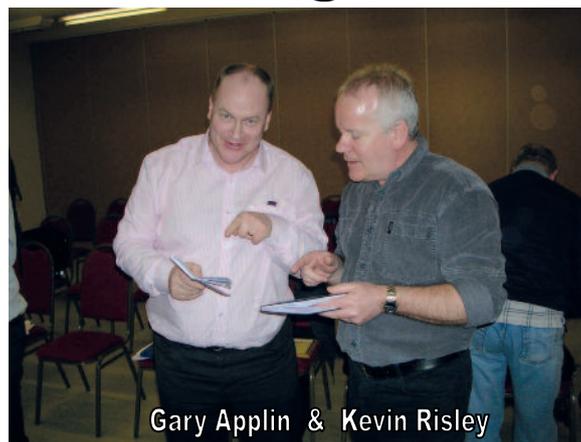
Above all we have always done the best we can, often under very difficult circumstances. The recent Harmonisation of T&C's was always going to be difficult: maybe that's why it was avoided for so long, but the extensive consultation exercise we carried out with staff helped enormously during some very tough and protracted negotiations and although there is still much work still to be done, I leave you in a position whereby:-

- The paying of Preceptorship has been agreed.
- Management have put forward a proposal to keep the Annual leave arrangements for this coming Christmas the same as last year, and the branch will be consulting with staff on that proposal, so look out for details as to how you can have your say.
- Mealbreaks have been a major problem across all Ambulance Trusts for as long as I can remember, and whilst the current arrangements may not be perfect, and there are well publicised areas that staffside are still not in agreement with, the first phase rollout in Essex has taken place, there are some local issues that need to be ironed out, but the evidence so far has shown that since the rollout less than 1% of staff have been eligible to claim for a late mealbreak payment, this means that just over 99% of staff received their break within or very close to their window. This is comparable to an average of about 64% prior to the arrangements going live. Staffside will continue to monitor and seek improvements as the arrangements come into effect across the Trust.
- We are very hopeful that we are almost at a position whereby discussions around Relief working can be put on hold for the time being, with fixed rest day rotas remaining as they currently are.

When we look around and see that the Armed Forces, the Police, Fire service, Local Government and many others are all shedding jobs by the thousands; that no-one except the very rich are going untouched by the vicious government cuts, and that the NHS is under attack of privatisation and cost cutting, it is clear that there will be more challenges ahead. I therefore wish the branch and the members all the very best for the future, that my successor will unite the branch, and the membership will offer support to the branch, and not just criticism, and those challenges will be faced by a strong and united Union.

With best wishes– Yours fraternally
Kevin Risley Branch Secretary (ex).

Handing over



Gary Applin & Kevin Risley

Most members, conscious that the Branch Annual General Meeting took place on the 2nd March, and having read the proposed revised Branch structures will be aware that a number of substantial changes have taken place with Branch Representatives and Officers standing down, and, or moving across to new roles, we also have a new UNISON Regional Officer, Tim Roberts. Of course there are also new faces filling some of those old slots and a full report, update on these and other changes will be given in the next edition of Newsletter No 51.

There are a number of ballots to take place and proper procedures to be followed as per the UNISON Rule Book, it is essential that these are followed, so we would ask that members will bear with us during this transition period. It will take a couple of weeks for the appropriate 'handovers' to take place; however the initial main changes are listed on the back of this Newsletter and as usual are repeated every month, meanwhile PLEASE check these details before you make a "contact call" to ensure that you have the right person in the right role who has been elected into that post. In thanking those people for their past input into the branch there is inevitably a short transition period of overlap, but clearly we must respect the decisions having been made by the people concerned, (standing down) who for all their own reasons have elected to seek a more normal and uninterrupted working lifestyle.

Many Thanks E.M. Comms



First through the fence !

Monitor has confirmed the first two Ambulance Trusts will be authorised as Foundation Trusts from March 2011. These are the first of the eleven. They are:- South West Ambulance Service and South East Coast Ambulance Service. Under the current government's mad exodus to the promised land every Ambulance Service in England will have to become an F.T. trust, or form part of one by April 2014. E.M Comms

Beds HEOC Fire training corrections...

It was noticed in Issue 49 that the report reference fire safety training in Beds HEOC was incorrect. Apologies for that- It should have read- "One Team has had the update on fire training, the other 5 are in progress". Thanks go to the member for informing us.

Beds & Herts "Uncovered"

Following acceptance of the revised branch structure at the Branch AGM on Wednesday March 2nd 2011, the position of Divisional Secretary previously held by Barry Jarvis and myself ceased to exist. The aim of this being to bring the lesser-utilised County Lead position to the forefront of the branch executive and with it an increased ownership, responsibility and accountability for the union related matters within easy reach of the regions 6 localities including those relating to the branch's other non EEAT employers; NHSD, Initial Healthcare, Care UK, GS4forensics and the Thames, Norvic East Coast and Medical Services and Ambulance providers.

Post outlines and responsibilities for this and other branch roles were made available for members to view on the branch website well in advance of the AGM itself in order that any interested parties would have a better understanding of each position's function (s).

In light of the memberships increasing criticism of its senior staffside, I have advised those who have contacted me to complain or vent their frustrations, that in order to truly effect change members need to be more involved, to take a more active role within their branch. One of the main reasons why the same people get re-elected to these senior staffside and committee positions year on year is because as a rule, nobody else can be bothered to step up to the mark and make a bid for change.

I have highlighted on numerous occasions that it is simply not good enough for members to stand on the sidelines waving fists and shouting about how crap the union is, but be unwilling to be part of the solution. Yet it appears that this advice has fallen on deaf ears- well within the Beds & Herts localities at least because there were no expressions of interest or advance nominations received from these areas for the County Lead roles.

So despite some changes being made within the committee including the appointment of a new Branch Secretary and Chair, the Beds and Herts County Lead Rep and H&S Lead positions remain unfilled thereby leaving members within these localities with no senior point of contact.

This is an unacceptable situation, made worse because Bedfordshire has no local reps either and is therefore the only County within the entire Trust with no staffside representation at all. There are currently 5 activists in Hertfordshire, but the absence of County Leads means that they will potentially find themselves faced with having to manage a disproportionate case workload.

Its not too late to put yourself forward for these County (and /or workplace roles)- in fact, the sooner the better I'd say because an absence of staffside representation at workplace and County level may also potentially result in the membership in these areas having little or any representation in respect of discussions about any future changes to current terms and conditions, pay and workplace patterns- to name but a few. Information about what these roles entail can be found on the branch website or by contacting Jackie Robinson by e-mail at jackie.robinson2@nhs.net or by phone on 07890357493

Jackie. Robinson Branch Membership Officer

Black Members Conference

As Black Members Officer I recently attended the Black Members Conference which was held in Glasgow from January 21st to January 23rd. As a first time Delegate to the Conference I found it interesting just being at the Conference, and also I found it was excellent and well attended. The conference was opened by the Chairman Bev Millet, then Angela Lyner UNISON's President gave a good speech to conference members. Then we had 5 motions which were about the continuing cuts among Black members and that Black members should stand up for their rights. Dave Prentis then spoke to the Conference and his speech was also excellent, and reminded Delegates and Visitors about the march in London on Saturday March 26th urging everybody to be there.

Then later that afternoon there were workshops, and I attended the Health meeting which was also well attended, there we had an excellent discussion and question and answer session. Afterwards I asked one of the guest speakers about the proportion of black members within the workforce of the Scottish Ambulance service, he said he believed there were not many, but asked me to e-mail him and he would put me in touch with the person who would know.

Later I attended the Eastern Regional meeting which was well attended where we heard that the two motions that were going to be put to conference on the Saturday were to be put back to the Sunday instead.

There was a Civic Reception at the end of the Day 1 of the Conference, so all in all Day one went well and I got to know other Eastern Regional members.

The second day of the Conference began on Saturday morning with Roger Mc Kenzie who also gave an excellent speech, we then went on to the motions of the morning session of the conference and all 8 were passed and carried, none defeated.

After lunch I attended the workshop on Challenging Racism in the workplace, again it was well attended, and centred around how Black workers should be better represented at Tribunals, and Racism at work should be discouraged.

Later we had an afternoon speaker Diane Abbott who was really inspirational, she told us she was the first black woman to enter Cambridge University.

We had 6 motions in the afternoon session of the day which were all carried.

That evening there was a social held in the Glasgow Science Museum, many people came and I stayed for a while, so I felt the second day of the conference ended well. The third and final day began with the standing order report, then we had the final 13 motions and 2 emergency motions which were all carried.

The Conference finally came to a close, I felt it had been all worthwhile attending the event having learnt a lot from it, to be a first time delegate and being able to meet other delegates and visitors was beneficial to me. I certainly will attend next year if I am able to. To me all three days of the Conference were excellent.

Anand Pillai Branch Black Members Officer

Your FREE Diary 2011

awaits collection

Please contact Jackie Robinson for your 2011 copy. Requests can be made by the following methods-

By E-mail to detailsupdate@eeas-unison.com or Jackie.robinson2@nhs.net Or by phone or text to 07890357493. But PLEASE remember to include your Job role, home and workplace address, membership number, with your request, and note that this information is still urgently required, irrespective of whether there's a Diary involved or not. Many Thanks



The new Health & Safety Representative Lead for Suffolk County is Jeff Pittman. Jeff works out of Waveney Depot- his contacts are 07941436112 or email- Jeff.pittman@eastamb.nhs.uk

UNISON Branch Officer Listing 2011

Please note where a Branch Officer has taken on other roles these are also listed.

Chairperson Tim Killick 07540079994 t.killick@eeas-unison.com
Note (Chairpersons post) there were 2 candidates at the AGM one has since dropped out so this will need to be ratified at the next B.C. (Date to be advised.)
Branch Convenor Barry Jarvis 07725065539 Barry.Jarvis@eastamb.nhs.uk
Secretary Gary Applin 07773136495 gapplin@eeas-unison.com
Treasurer Wendy Senter 07900272897 w.senter@eastamb.nhs.uk
Membership Officer Jackie Robinson 07890357493 Jackie.robinson2@nhs.net
Branch Health & Safety Officer Rick Gray 07876182084 rick.gray@eastamb.nhs.uk
Casework Coordinator Tim Killick 07540079994 t.killick@eeas-unison.com
Communications Officer Eric Miller 07787644678 eric_miller@talk21.com
Newsletter Tele/ Fax 01603-737176.

Communications

Please Note- Your contributions into the Newsletter are always appreciated, remember we are circulating and servicing an area of 7500 sq miles. Each Newsletter as it goes out, also goes straight onto the branch website and can easily be accessed by going into the Branch site at www.eeas-unison.com as well as all the "back issues" of the newsletter since the merger, so it is a two way street. Its circulation is 750 copies, sent via the County Leads for distribution. It is also sent out on PDF if you wish to be included in this mailing please forward your e-mail address to myself. Also other up to date branch business can be found on the Website including the Minutes of Branch committee meetings and other activity taken on your behalf by the Branch Officers. To assist communications best practice we have also requested that all minutes of the Trust Staff Partnership Forums where branch activity takes place in your interests, are also made readily available for members information as well as all those employed by the Trust. Eric Miller Communications Officer

ICT Officer & Website Tim Ingall 07920442315 Tim.ingall@east.nhs.uk
The Branch Website address is www.eeas-unison.com
Retired Members Secretary Steve Beckley nominated, the Post to be determined by contacting the Retired members as per the UNISON Rule book.

Education

Education Coordinator & Lifelong Learning Ian Cook 07932680885
ian.cook@eastamb.nhs.uk or ickook@aol.com
NON EMERGENCY SERVICES Officer Carole Taylor 07745549287
carole.taylor@eastamb.nhs.uk
Disabled Members Dave Edwards 07884327916 Dave.edwards1@nhs.net
LGBT Members Candy Tilson candy.tilson@aol.com

County Leads

Beds County lead Rep Vacant

Herts County Lead Rep Vacant

Cambs County Lead Rep Peter Davis pdavis@eeas-unison.com
Essex County Lead Rep John Lee 07719660747 John.Lee@essexamb.nhs.uk
Norfolk County Lead to ballot Carole Taylor & Steve Imrie

Women's Officer Carole Taylor 07745549287 carole.taylor@eaamb.nhs.uk
Black Members Officer Anand Pillai 07504703170 anand.pillai@eastamb.nhs.uk
Equalities Officer Anand Pillai 07504703170 anandm.pillai@ntworld.com

Health & Safety Leads

H & S Lead Beds Vacant - For the time being contact Rik Gray
H & S Lead Essex John Cogan John.Cogan@eastamb.nhs.uk
H & S Lead Norfolk Janet Flack 07592074972 janet.flack@eaamb.nhs.uk
H & S Lead Herts Vacant- For time being contact Rik Gray
H & S Lead Suffolk Jeff Pitman 07941436112 jeff.pittman@myway.com
H&S Lead Cambridge To Ballot -Alan Chamberlain and Phil Ecuyer
Branch Accounts Auditors Andy Broad - Brenda Palfreman- Helen Leek- Richard Lewis

Young members Officer Vacant

Regional Organiser UNISON Tim Roberts t.roberts@unison.org.uk
UNISON Direct 0845 355 0845 or visit UNISON at www.unison.org.uk

Note- Please inform Communications if your details change in any way at all.

Membership Details Update

Yes, its me again; the proverbial "nag" reminding members of this branch just how important it is that their membership details are up to date and accurate.

As previously reported, there has been a relatively small trickle of members updating their membership details via the detailsupdate@eeas-unison.com facility but this is in no way representative of the number of members we have in this branch. In fact if it weren't for the likes of branch officers such as Daren Jones, Ian Cook & McKenna, Janet Flack and Rik Gray actively chasing up members within their Suffolk and Norfolk Localities, I would not have been able to update as many details as I have to date so a heartfelt "Thank You" to those named above for their help.

It is not possible for the Branch Membership's Officer to chase after every individual member, nor is it their responsibility to do so which is why it is essential that you ensure that notifying the branch membership officer is one of those important "things to be done" if you change, or have already changed, any of your personal details- no matter how significant a change it may seem.

Membership can also lapse without your knowing and as a result of something as simple as a change of job title or pay band. It is generally only when a problem occurs such as when a member seeks advice or during a branch-wide membership exercise that these errors and/or oversights are highlighted and the time involved in back-tracking or re-instating membership is greater than that involved in simply checking, updating in the first place. Therefore it is also essential that you check your wage slip or bank statement (dependent on your payment method) every month to ensure your UNISON deductions are being made. Words alone cannot stress the importance of ensuring that your personal details, and most importantly your workplace and home addresses are up to date on your membership records. Think about it... We currently exist within a decade of increasing industrial unrest: with a Government intent on cutting and / or privatising public services, attacking our pensions, increasing the retirement age and freezing pay and progression to name but a few of the things they would rather do than maybe, say, proactively address issues such as "fat cats" paying themselves huge bonuses...?

At a local level within the East of England Ambulance Trust, we're already feeling the effects of the inharmonious harmonisation of our legacy terms and conditions; likewise our members working for some of our private providers are on permanent alert, knowing as they do that their employers are keen to get rid of their (more expensive) TUPE arrangements at the first opportunity and our NHSD colleagues are currently feeling the effects of a new roistering system. What would happen in the event that the Union needed to ballot its members in respect of industrial action?

By law, these ballot papers must be sent to the members home address so if your details are not current on our membership system it will mean a lost vote and in turn, a poor return on a matter of great significance to your everyday working lives.

So, at the risk of repeating myself (again), updating your details really couldn't be a more simple task... all you have to do is to e-mail your current details to detailsupdate@eeas-unison.com or Jackie.robinson2@nhs.net. Alternatively, you can text or voicemail your details to me on 07890357493. Whichever method you choose, please remember to leave a contact number so I can call you back if further clarity is required. I will send you confirmation as soon as your details have been updated on the membership database.

As ever, thanks in anticipation...
Jackie Robinson Membership Officer