

# unionsouthwest

e-newsletter of the South West TUC

February 2013

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## March against the cuts

Saturday 9th February 10am-noon

Dorchester

Dorchester, Weymouth, Portland and District Trades Union Council is organising a protest march in Dorchester in opposition to cuts to public services.

The County Council will be announcing its budget on Valentine's day. Lee Rhodes, Secretary of the Trades Council said: "The Trades Council would like to pick up on the timing and take the opportunity to ask politicians to show their love for public services and not to massacre them.... You get the idea I am sure!"

If you feel that you could provide practical support, such as stewards for the march, or if you would like any further information, please contact Lee on [lee@the-rhodes.org.uk](mailto:lee@the-rhodes.org.uk)

<http://www.tuc.org.uk/events/detail.cfm?event=3563&regional=8>

## Stop fire service cuts

The South West FBU is leading a campaign against proposed cuts in fire services across Devon and Cornwall. There is a consultation programme over the planned cuts so make your voice heard. See more [here](#)

## Lobby of Farm Minister

## *SOUTH WEST*

Unite organized a successful lobby of David Heath, Frome and Somerton Liberal Democrat MP and Farm Minister in support of the Agricultural Wages Board.

The Agricultural Wages Board protects pay and conditions for 150,000 vulnerable rural workers, including many thousands in the South West.

In year 2000 the MP for Frome and Somerton David Heath signed an Early Day Motion in the House of Commons in support of the Agricultural Wages Board. Now, as Farm Minister, he is leading the charge to abolish this vital safety net for thousands of rural workers and their families.

## **Café Unite open to all**

The new Café Unite is open for business in the refurbished Unite office in Bristol.

Café Unite is situated on the ground floor at Tony Benn House, Victoria Street Bristol BS1 6AY and open for breakfasts from 8am to 3pm.

## **Call to Learn**

Unionlearn has announced the second stage of the 'Call to Learn' project which helps unions and their partners to set up collective learning fund agreements in the South West.

The project provides up to £6,000 to sponsor a trade union through the stages of developing a sustainable collective learning fund agreement, and offers information, advice, brokering and training for representatives of unions and partner organisations.

Unions have two opportunities to apply for sponsorship for a development project.

Friday 22nd February (to start your sponsored project by 1st April) or Friday 26th April 2013 (to start your sponsored project by 1st June)

For information, advice and details of the support available click [here](#)

Telephone: 0117 947 0521 or [unionlearnsouthwest@tuc.org.uk](mailto:unionlearnsouthwest@tuc.org.uk)

## **Sssshhh!**

[National Libraries Day](#) is this Saturday, the 9th February

## **Learning Centre Network Day**

**Tuesday 12th February 10am-3.30pm**

**Richard Huish College, Taunton**

This event will explain the new bidding rounds for Collective Learning Funds and information surrounding Maths Champions. This event will provide the opportunity to share approaches and good practice. Tribal will deliver various presentations and workshops to introduce their Go Learn Online Learning Platform for Learning Centres; opportunity to have a go on the Go Learn courses; find out how these courses will work in your Learning Centre; Call to Learn Collective Learning Fund - new bidding rounds and a session on Maths Champions.

## **Moving Forward**

**South West unionlearn Conference**

**Thursday 14th March**

**Gipsy Hill Hotel, Pinhoe, Exeter**

The South West unionlearn conference will be a morning event with buffet lunch. Partners and providers will be attending and running stalls during the event with various materials and the chance to discuss further, these include colleagues from N-Gaged,

## *SOUTH WEST*

Equality South West, City of Bristol College, Careers South West. The agenda includes the chance to attend Carousels on equalities; green work and FE Loans. Kay Carberry, TUC Assistant General Secretary will deliver the keynote speech.

For more information on both of these events please contact Emily Westacott; [ewestacott@tuc.org.uk](mailto:ewestacott@tuc.org.uk)

## **TravelWatch South West General Meeting**

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 10.30am-3pm**

**Conference Centre, Somerset College, Wellington Road, Taunton TA1 5AX**

Briefings on the major public transport issues in the South West of England including the future of the Great Western train franchise, the resilience of the regional rail network and the increasing threats to our local bus services.

A list of speakers from the bus and rail industries is been arranged to discuss these vital issues affecting the future of public transport with delegates including Mark Hopwood, Managing Director, First Great Western. The full agenda will be published on the TravelWatch SouthWest website [www.travelwatchesouthwest.org](http://www.travelwatchesouthwest.org)

Secure a place at [meetings@travelwatchesouthwest.org](mailto:meetings@travelwatchesouthwest.org)

## **Petition against the closure of Dorset Enterprises**

The Dorset Enterprises factory has been providing supported employment for people with disabilities in the Borough since 1914, making garden furniture.

Bournemouth Borough Council are set to close the factory in a matter of weeks putting 22 people out of work, most of whom have a disability.

Unison is calling on councillors to vote against the recommendation to close the factory and instead explore additional options to return the factory to break-even status including finding a suitable business partner.

[Sign the petition against the closure](#)

Get a hard copy of the Petition by emailing [j.miller@unison.co.uk](mailto:j.miller@unison.co.uk) or calling 07415 332188.

## **Public sector prisons not private sector profit**

The Government has announced the closure of seven public sector prisons including HM Gloucester and also HMP Shepton Mallet.

Unions believe the plans will increase overcrowding in prisons and harm offenders' family ties, making rehabilitation of offenders more difficult. Travelling time and cost for both professional and personal prison visitors will be increased.

The closures will hurt the local economy costing hundreds of skilled, good quality jobs.

The closures represent further privatisation by stealth as the number of prisoners housed in private prisons will increase as the public prisons decrease. Private prisons are exempt from closure and make considerable monies via overcrowding. New prisoner places being created are mainly in private prisons.

PCS is calling for an independent review into the impact of privatisation across the Prison Service and has launched a petition in support [www.pcs.org.uk/prisonspetition](http://www.pcs.org.uk/prisonspetition)

## **Future of Education debate**

**Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> February 7-9pm**

**Gloucester Academy, Cotteswold Road, Gloucester GL4 6RN**

Speakers:

## SOUTH WEST

Debbie Lightfoot, NASUWT NEC; John Pemberthy, NUT NEC; John Reilly, Head of Gloucester Academy

### Work Your Proper Hours Day 1 March

If staff who regularly work unpaid overtime did all their extra hours from the start of the year they wouldn't get paid until 1 March 2013. The TUC has named this day Work Your Proper Hours Day to celebrate their hard work.

Now in its ninth year, Work Your Proper Hours Day is a light-hearted campaign that celebrates the unsung - and unrewarded - hours that staff put in to help their employer and boost the UK economy.

Last year, the TUC found that employees across the UK worked nearly two billion unpaid hours, worth over £29bn to the economy.

[www.workyourproperhoursday.org.uk](http://www.workyourproperhoursday.org.uk).

### Strong unions - turning the tide

**Friday 8 March**

**TUC Congress House, London**

Owen Jones, Manuel Cortes and Ian Lavery MP will be speaking at the Unions21 20th Anniversary Conference. The full-day event will also include keynote speeches from TUC General Secretary Frances O'Grady and Labour Policy Review Coordinator Jon Cruddas MP.

To register please [click here](#). The delegate rate is £50.

At the conference new thinking on job quality and justice at work will be revealed in a report from the [Fair Work Commission](#).

### Leadership workshop for BME trade unionists

**Saturday 16th March 10.45am to 4pm**

**Hilton Hotel, Newport NP18 2LX**

Are you a black or ethnic minority union member, activist, rep or officer?

Develop your skills and share experiences with others at this [one day workshop](#) provided by South West TUC Education and Wales TUC. Get the latest picture for BME workers, hear about leadership in unions and in the workplace, learn more about mentoring and coaching, build your confidence and network with others. The workshop is free to trade unionists and support with overnight accommodation costs may also be available on request. Speakers confirmed so far: Wilf Sullivan (TUC Race Equality Officer) and Pam Heneberry (Professional Development Centre).

Email [tucedsw@tuc.org.uk](mailto:tucedsw@tuc.org.uk) for an application form - closing date to register is Friday 1st March

### Plymouth City's 'Plan for Jobs'

A total of 19 projects will aim to create several thousand jobs as part of an innovative plan that brings together actions and commitments from city organisations to pump energy, motivation and substantial funding into the local economy to stimulate growth and jobs.

### South West skills news

The South West's number one Skills and Employment Newsletter is [here](#)

Keep up with all our latest news, publications and more on Facebook and Twitter

[https://twitter.com/#!/South\\_West\\_SLIM](https://twitter.com/#!/South_West_SLIM)

<http://www.facebook.com/swo.slim>

## Confronting women's poverty: turning things around

**Friday 8 March (International Women's Day) 9.30am - 3.00pm**

**Bristol City Hall, College Green, Bristol BS1 5TR**

This free event will welcome national speakers to Bristol, alongside representatives from organisations in the South West that are committed to addressing the impact of government policies on poverty.

These government policies have led to unprecedented levels of poverty among women (and men) in terms of welfare cuts, increased debt, loss of housing benefit, rising fuel and food bills, and more. These policies have widened the gap between rich and poor. Bristol's Confronting Women's Poverty event will highlight the everyday reality of women's poverty, as well as work towards finding positive solutions to turn things around.

This event is free but you must book a place by clicking

<http://confrontingwomenspoverty.eventbrite.com/>

For further information: [confrontingpoverty@gmail.com](mailto:confrontingpoverty@gmail.com)

Twitter: @ConfrontPoverty

Blog: <http://confrontingwomenspoverty.blogspot.co.uk>

[www.bristolfawcett.org.uk](http://www.bristolfawcett.org.uk)

## Michael Foot memorial in Plymouth

Michael Foot was a towering figure in British politics. Born in Plymouth in 1913, he was elected MP for Plymouth Devonport in 1945 and later as the MP for Ebbw Vale in 1960 until 1992. After a distinguished Parliamentary career, he became Leader of the Labour Party in 1980. Michael is remembered in Plymouth not only as one of its city's most popular MPs, a trade unionist and a successful journalist but also as a loyal and high-profile supporter of Plymouth Argyle. Right up until his death in 2010 Michael remained an ardent supporter of the City of Plymouth, its football team and its people.

[Michael Foot Memorial](#)

Plymouth City Council has launched a fund to raise money for a memorial to Michael Foot in Freedom Fields Park in Plymouth. Do you have memories of Michael Foot? Did you know him? Did you work with him? Are you related? If so, please email us your memories to [michaelfootmemorial@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:michaelfootmemorial@plymouth.gov.uk)

Support the appeal with donations on the [secure website](#).

## Damaged skin points to missing gloves

A mechanical engineer developed a painful skin condition when he was exposed to chemicals at work. The 59-year-old Unite member from Plymouth, whose name has not been released, developed dermatitis after he was exposed to several different chemicals in his role as an engineer for Camtec Engineering Ltd. He was not provided with suitable gloves and as a result his hands became covered in the liquids.

He first began to notice problems with his hands in 2009 and was told by his GP that he was suffering from occupational dermatitis. He was provided with creams but his hands continued to be painful and cracked. It was another six months before his employer took his condition seriously and provided him with protective gloves.

## *SOUTH WEST*

Faced with a union-backed compensation claim, Camtec Engineering admitted liability and settled the claim out of court for £13,500. Terry Keefe, regional co-ordinating officer from Unite, commented: “Our member has been exposed to irritants that caused this painful condition through no fault of his own. Protective equipment, in this case gloves, avoid this type of condition from developing but the employer failed to even do that.”

## **Employment Studies Review**

The Centre for Employment Studies Research (CESR) at the University of the West of England, Bristol publishes the CESR Review twice per year.

It is aimed at employment relations and human resource management practitioners, trade unionists, researchers, lecturers and students in these and related fields.

Click on the link to access the latest edition: [CESR Review - January 2013](#)

## **South West TUC Annual Conference**

**19-20 April**

**Unison Holiday Centre, Croyde Bay, North Devon**

The Annual Conference is open to visitors as well as the new Regional Council delegates from unions and trades union councils. The agenda will be packed with keynote speakers, breakout discussions and motions. Live music and dancing will fill the Friday evening's entertainment and the centre's facilities will be open for all to enjoy.

For more information or to claim you place contact [southwest@tuc.org.uk](mailto:southwest@tuc.org.uk)

## **Workers' Memorial Day**

**Sunday 28th April 12.30-2.30pm**

**Bristol Cathedral**

The South West TUC Executive has confirmed its support for a grand gathering of trade unionists and others who wish to remember those killed and injured at work and fight to protect the living. Plans are being developed for a short event in Bristol Cathedral involving the TUC, unions, people who have faced the trauma of accidents at work, various faith community representatives, those who have responsibility for public health and safety at work, etc. People will be invited to gather outside the Cathedral at 12.30 with as many union banners we can muster in order to join a gathering from 1 to 2pm. We hope to have a good cross section of speakers along with music from Red Notes Choir. It will be important to reflect the international dimension and remember workers around the world killed to supply us with goods, services and news. The event will also highlight those who suffer for challenging dangerous conditions and confront the current attack on health and safety regulations.

Following the event, wreaths will be laid at the Workers' Memorial Day plaque in Castle Park.

Plans are still taking shape so please let [southwest@tuc.org.uk](mailto:southwest@tuc.org.uk) know if you have suggestions for speakers, music or guests to invite.