

Annual Report 2019



Forward wi



Kev Terry, in the Chair as well as the saddle on his sponsored ride around Cuba

Message from Kev in the chair

2018 was a very tumultuous year for many with no clear vision of what Brexit means. While the politicians argue, the workers suffer attacks on their terms and conditions. Wages have been squeezed and all unions are fighting for their members. In all this, we have had some wins. My own union Unite, went to Brussels to help sister unions beat off attacks on drivers working time and rest periods - and we won. No doubt they will be back so no resting on our laurels.

Tolpuddle was a resounding success, the weather was fair and Jeremy Corbyn both stole the show and caused havoc with his walk-about and meeting as many people as he could. The festival is a coming-together of

unions to celebrate the struggles of our forebears and reminds us that the fight still goes on. So let's look forward to 2019 with renewed vigour and with hope and positive actions, we will prevail.

Thanks to Joanne Kaye, the vice-chair, all the Executive, Regional Council members and the team in the South West TUC.

Joanne Kaye, Vice-Chair



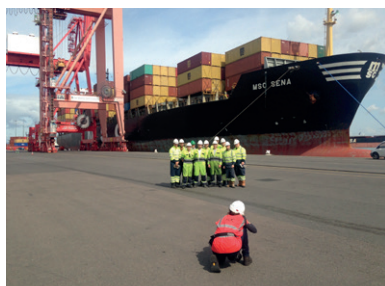
South West TUC Regional Council

th your union

Brexit has dominated so much of the news agenda for the last year. It has squeezed out critical issues that deserve attention. The South West, like the whole country, remains divided on the issue but there is much trade unions can unite around. We fight to protect the limited rights workers have and the highly skilled jobs that depend upon EU trade. Some of the region's 'crown jewel' employers, especially in aerospace and advanced engineering have sounded warning alarms over Britain crashing or slipping into protectionist border controls and tariffs.

Health and Social Care already has acute staff shortages, a problem that will only get worse after Brexit. The important South West food and drink sector could be boosted by higher prices but the consumer will pay the price. Finding labour for seasonal agriculture will probably lead the gang masters to recruit more vulnerable migrants from further afield than the EU.

Brexit has been on the agenda for many meetings through the South West TUC year. Clare Moody



Jess Hurd taking photos of apprentices at Bristol Port

MEP provided the Regional Council with an update from Brussels and Matt Griffiths from Business West gave the Executive a stark assessment of potential damage to investment and long-term prospects.

The officers of the South West TUC have met the region's Labour MPs through the year and although Brexit has dominated discussions other issues have been raised such as the need to reform apprentice minimum wages, living wage campaign and workers' rights.

Apprentice Pay

The complexity of the National Minimum Wage and rates for young people are one of the key reasons why so many apprentices are underpaid. The rates are far too low in any event but the TUC believes more must be done to stop 'non-compliance'. After researchers from University of the West of England exposed the level of under-payment the South West TUC launched a campaign to raise awareness of the issue and challenge training providers to do more to tackle it.

A simple to use pay calculator is now online at www.tuc.org.uk/apprenticepay and a range of materials has been circulated

aimed at helping apprentices.

The South West TUC believes the government should simplify the rules and end the discrimination against young workers. But action could be taken immediately by mandating training providers check minimum wage compliance at the same time they check training records.



South West TUC Officers meet Labour MPs from the region

Living Wage

The campaign for Better Jobs in Bristol has led to Marvin Rees, the Mayor, signing as an accredited Living Wage employer - the first council in the region to do so. It is hoped that other authorities such as Cornwall, Plymouth and Stroud will follow suit.



Apprentice pay campaign materials

This ensures that staff in the supply chain as well as direct workers are paid the real Living Wage, currently £9 an hour.

Care workers are amongst the beneficiaries of the Living Wage Campaign but the pressures facing them to accept worse terms remain.



Mayor Marvin Rees signs the Living Wage pledge

UNISON care workers took several days of strike action at Sirona Care, a so-called social enterprise based mainly in Bath. The action took considerable courage by carers who remain determined to stick together to be treated fairly and with respect.

New Deal for Workers

The TUC called a big march to demand a New Deal for Workers in May. The rally attracted a lot of media attention. The South West team again marshalled the front of the London procession.



Dave Prentis, UNISON General Secretary joins Tudor Evans, Plymouth leader and union reps in signing the Ethical Care Charter

Most workers have still not seen pay recover to their levels in 2008. The pay squeeze is the longest in 200 years.

Delegates supported a motion from PCS last year protesting at the on-going



Nigel Costley with Bristol Mayor Marvin Rees



New Deal for Workers demo

pay cap for many public sector workers especially in the civil service. A recent survey found 69% of civil servants dissatisfied with their pay and conditions.

College lecturers, fed up with being left further and further behind have taken strike action in four colleges across the South West. Further education has suffered from cut backs and staff teaching

the same courses, are on pay levels well below those in secondary schools.

USDW recently launched its Time for Better Pay calling for a £10 an hour, minimum 16-hour contracts and a right to 'normal hours' contracts. It backed up its case with a comprehensive survey of some 10,500 workers that exposed the problems of poor pay and insecure jobs.

Impact of cuts

The cuts to public spending continue despite the government's promise of an end to austerity. West Country Councils have been hit hard and are yet to make further savings. Somerset County Council's Conservative leadership expressed its frustration with government and local Tory MPs after it announced its financial crisis.

Respect and racism

USDW also highlighted the increasing abuse on shop workers including the lack of police response to shoplifters. The South West TUC met with Sue Mountstevens, the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner to discuss these and other



Sirona care workers lobby the council in Bath



Nick Ireland and Kay Timbrell promote USDaw's pay campaign

issues. She explained the squeeze on police resources and the lack of capacity they now have, to respond as they would like.

The meeting also discussed rising levels of abuse and racist attacks especially in the wake of the EU referendum. Sue Mountstevens has been a strong advocate for more attention on such crimes alongside domestic abuse and modern slavery.

Trade unionists joined others to pay tribute to Kamil Ahmad and Bijan Ebrahimi asylum seekers who were killed in racist attacks in Bristol. Bristol Cable writer Rebecca Yeo, who has championed the cause of disabled refugees, gave an impassioned speech to the Regional Council. The need to challenge prejudice and racism in workplaces remains a priority for the TUC and all unions.

Asher Craig, Bristol's Deputy Mayor joined Joanne Kaye at the Stand Up To Racism event to mark the Holocaust Memorial Day.

Heart Unions Week

Heart Unions Week is a great opportunity to celebrate the value and



successes of trade unions as well as to promote current campaigns. This year a central theme was the case against



Painting called: Sorry! Tribute to the murdered Kamil Ahmad

zero-hours contracts. Unions used the week to recruit new members and promote their campaigns. Lots of people took to social media to shout out for their unions.

West Country Workers

A special edition of the popular West Country Workers was produced to be used in and around Heart Unions week. This

well written, good looking magazine provides more in depth look at some of the key topics in the region.

The South West TUC mailing lists have been



Roger McKenzie, UNISON Assistant General Secretary with Michael Auguste at the Plymouth event to mark the anniversary of the Black Power salute at the 1968 Olympics

substantially pruned following strict adherence to GDPR. The South West TUC annual conference proved an opportunity to share advice about GDPR as well as debate the tensions between the



Tom De Wit, Tolpuddle Martyrs Museum Manager and Amanda Brown, UNISON Dorset present a cheque, raised through t-shirt sales, to Bus Shelter Dorset to buy sanitary products for homeless women

need to gather and spread news, information and solidarity messages with the needs of data protection rules.

TUC Education

Matching the needs of reps with convenient training courses will always be a challenge in a big region like the South West. The network of college providers of TUC

Asher Craig, Bristol's Deputy Mayor

education shrunk in the face of falling demand, the rise of individual union courses, pressures on reps over time-off and cuts in public funding. A London college had been covering the provision, but the South West TUC was delighted when the City of Bristol College agreed to take it back with Alison

Foster employed as the new co-ordinator. She is developing the menu of reps training as well as a number of short courses and seminars.

Mental health at work

An area of huge interest for rep training is around mental health at work. Rising stress as well as heightened awareness has raised mental health as a core trade union issue. Unions won't accept that workers need to be hardened or 'resilient' to the causes of stress and anxiety. Union reps are also there to

expose and help resolve the causes of mental ill health. Unions are also seeking to respond to the needs of neuro-diverse workplaces recognising that everyone has different needs and the best organisations are those who understand the variety of mental health conditions and accommodate them positively.

The South West TUC Executive established a mental health working group that allowed union reps to share some ground-breaking work being done. This led to a highly successful symposium in Exeter.

Health and Safety

Events were held across



Workers Memorial Day event in Mariners' Church, The Docks, Gloucester



Hugh Robertson, TUC Health and Safety Officer, Mike Osment, Mayor of Salisbury, Joanne Kaye and Nigel Costley

the region to mark Workers Memorial Day. A short memorial event was held in the Mariners' Church in Gloucester Docks.

Salisbury

Meanwhile Salisbury suffered from the after effects of the Novichok poisoning attack. The tourist trade fell and work was disrupted by the big clean up operation. The South West TUC held a successful Health and Safety rep conference in the town including a discussion on dealing with hazardous materials and emergency response procedures.

Past and future of work

Diversity, in all its forms, is



Alison Foster the new co-ordinator of trade union education for the region



Ines Lage in discussion with Ade Bamgboye, a UNISON delegate



Patrick Brione from the IPA speaks about the future of work

one feature in the debates over the future of work. A discussion at the Annual Conference featured Patrick Brione from the Involvement and Participation Association and Simon Fox from Unite who presented different scenarios for the years ahead. Automation and digital technologies are going to transform work for good and bad and unions will be there to represent the interest of working people.

Digital Future

The TUC has new online tools for unions and is working on a new digital initiative aimed at young workers.

Antonia Bance, TUC Head of Campaigns and Communications spoke to the Annual Conference to stress the need for unions to realise the potential of online organising.

TUC 150

Nigel Costley gave a presentation on the future of work to Wiltshire Trades Council's Thomas Helliker

Lecture. This was one of a number of trades council events through a year that was the TUC's 150th anniversary.

An exhibition highlighting the key stories of the TUC's history was shown at the Annual Conference and spent a few weeks at the Shire Hall in Dorchester.

Other events included taking the Tolpuddle story to London with Nigel Costley, Graham Moore and Gill Redmond providing an evening of words and song.

Historical trade union stories from around the region are told in a series online through the Tolpuddle Martyrs website. This also includes an extensive gallery of banners.

Tolpuddle Martyrs

The Tolpuddle Martyrs' Festival was held during the long, hot summer. It was a fantastic gathering to celebrate trade unionism and enjoy a wide range of music and political debate.

The South West TUC is represented on the Trust that has opened the Shire Hall and historic court room in Dorchester. The new attraction has already scooped a bag full of tourist awards.

Letters written in 1834 by Vicar of Tolpuddle Rev.

Thomas Warren were displayed at



Antonia Bance, TUC's Head of Campaigns and Communications with Nigel Costley and Joanne Kaye after speaking about the digital future for unions

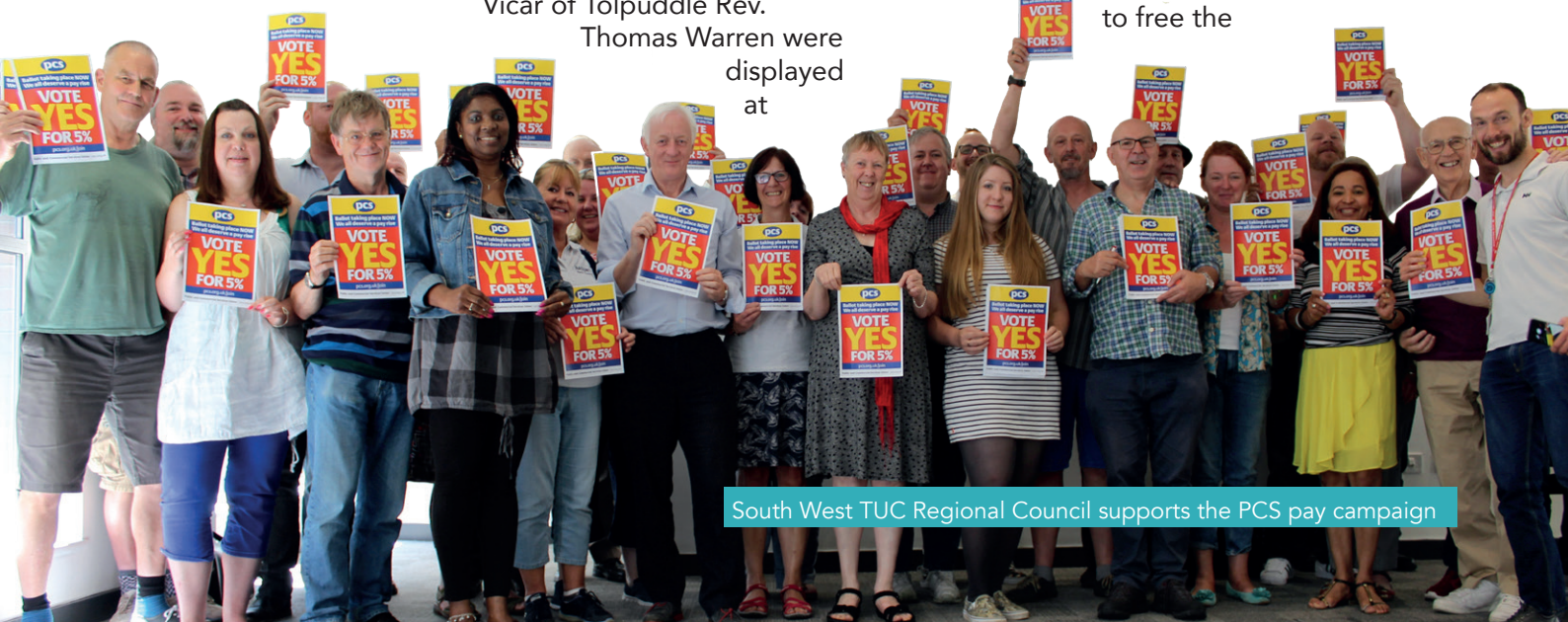


Lord Neuberger, former head of the Supreme Court helps launch the Shire Hall museum



Nigel Costley with Kate Adie

Congress House prior to being put on display at Tolpuddle Martyrs Museum. Warren describes disturbances at the Vicarage after he refused to sign the petition to parliament to free the



South West TUC Regional Council supports the PCS pay campaign



Nigel Costley joins Petroc College management and union reps in signing the TUC's Dying to Work Charter

Martyrs. He goes on to say that "these Unions MUST be put a stop to, or the country will be together by the ears..." These important original letters were secured by generous donations by trade unions.

Oliver Trevett

Very sad news came with the death of Oliver Trevett. Oliver was a branch secretary for the National Union of Agricultural



Oliver Trevett with Neil Kinnock planting a new Tolpuddle tree in 1984

Workers, later on part of the Transport and General Worker's Union and a champion for farmworkers rights. Oliver was involved with the

Festival from the 1950s and spent more than 25 years living at Tolpuddle where he died peacefully aged 92.

Dying to Work Charter

The Dying to Work Charter has been signed by more South West organisations.

They pledge to support workers who face a terminal diagnosis and who wish to continue working for as long as possible. Plymouth College, Petroc College in Devon, DAS in Bristol and Bristol City Council have agreed the charter.



Phil Bialyk, RMT Officer is given a fond farewell

South West TUC Pensioners

The South West TUC Pensioners' Conference attracted retired members from around the region and lots of unions. Delegates heard Jacqueline Cobb highlight pensioner poverty, Nigel Costley spoke about the changing nature of work, Neil Duncan-Jordon from National Pensioners Convention covered a range of subjects including generational solidarity a subject also taken up by Jack Jones, Policy Campaign and Support Officer from the TUC.

A range of motion's were passed on topics including ID checks for voting, free bus passes, social care and defence of the free TV licence for over 75s.

Farewell Phil

Joining the ranks of the retired was Phil Bialyk the well-respected regional officer for the RMT. Phil has played an active role in the South West over many years. He is now a leading Labour councillor in Exeter.

New South West Unite Regional Secretary

Steve Preddy took up the position of Regional Secretary for Unite after Peter Hughes switched to Wales Unite.

Girlie Magalula

A highlight of the last annual conference was the address by Girlie Magalula.

She was at the end of an exhausting tour to garner support for her embattled union in Swaziland.

Women in leadership

During the



Steve Preddy, the new Unite Regional Secretary



Girlie Magagula enjoys a moment on Croyde Bay beach after a long tour on behalf of her union in Swaziland

year of women, we teamed up with TUC Education to run the first ever Women in Leadership Programme in the South West. Pulling together 24 women from 11 different trade unions and just as many work backgrounds, the women developed their own leadership style, how to speak up for themselves and others, running their own campaigns and lobbying for change - all whilst being exposed to women leaders from the region. It was a great success with most of the women having already risen at work, in their trade



Maggie Roberts in the chair for the pensioners' conference



Women in Leadership participants gather for their visit to Brussels



Cornwall Trades Union Council at one of its regular street stalls

Bridgwater Trades Union Council supports GMB pay campaign



Women in Leadership at the European Parliament in Brussels



Dave Chapple speaking to the Wells May Day rally



Steve Gillan POA General Secretary speaks to Bridgwater Trades Union Council

active with regular street stalls.

There were two meetings of all trades union councils this



Salisbury Trades Union Council at the Carnival



The first Wells May Day march

unions and in their personal lives.

Trades Union Councils

The region's trades union councils help co-ordinate trade union campaigns in their areas. Championed by Dave Chapple, the South West rep on the TUC Joint Consultative Committee, the councils have organised events, stalls and supported picket lines. Cornwall has been especially



Annual meeting of South West Trades Union Councils

Front of the procession
at the 2018 Tolpuddle
Martyrs' Festival



Billy Bragg



Wanda Wyporski,
Maxine Peake, Clare
Moody MEP and Dawn
Primarolo after a panel
debate on women



Drumming
session in the
Kids' Area



Captain Ska



Jeremy Corbyn
speaks to the
Tolpuddle
audience

Tolpuddle Martyrs' Festival 2019



Ruth George MP speaking to the Wells May Day rally

year and they heard from a range of speakers about their experiences of becoming active in unions.

The new Mendip Trades Union Council helped organise the first Wells May Day rally and Salisbury Trades Union Council joined the town's carnival with their banner.

Bridgwater Trades Union Council held a range of events including one with Steve Gillan, General Secretary of the Prison Officers Association.

Solidarity

One of the main roles of the TUC and Trades Union Councils is to show support and solidarity to unions on strike or leading particular campaigns. We have done that throughout the year such as to the care workers on strike at Sirona, the UCU Further Education staff on strike for a fair deal on pay, the campaign to break the pay



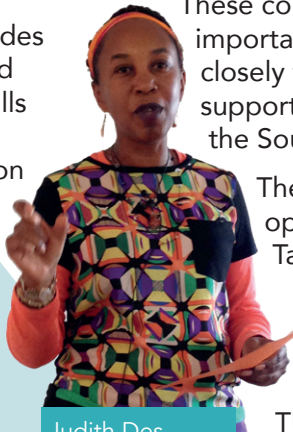
UCU picket line at Petroc College

cap still in force in the civil service and various other union campaigns.

Unions on Jersey have been fighting an unprecedented struggle with the island's government over public sector pay.

These confirm the importance of working closely together and supporting the work of the South West TUC.

The Executive had the opportunity to wish Tanya Parker a very happy special birthday and thanks for all her support in the TUC Office.



Judith Des Bonne spoke of her experiences as a black woman in Somerset



Unite out in Bristol for Heart Unions Week

Photo: David O'Toole

South West TUC Team

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Joanne Kaye Vice-Chair
Dave Chapple Trades Union Council South West rep

STAFF

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Marie Hughes Education Officer
Ines Lage Policy and Campaigns Support Officer
Tanya Parker Secretary
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Elaine Dobson, Keith Hatch and **Andy Moss** Tolpuddle Museum
Tom DeWit Manager
Caroline Binder Museum Shop and Festival Assistant



UCU members and supporters outside Bridgwater College



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