

RMT *news*

Essential reading for today's transport worker

TUBE LINES

TO BE
BROUGHT
BACK IN-HOUSE

SCRAP
THE
PPP



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www.rmt.org.uk

NATIONAL UNION OF RAIL, MARITIME & TRANSPORT WORKERS

Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD



APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP – please complete your application along with either the attached Direct Debit or a separate paybill mandate form.

Please use **BLOCK CAPITALS** and **black ink**. * Information that must be provided.

BRANCH NUMBER

1 PERSONAL DETAILS.

Surname*		Address*	
Forename(s)*			
Home phone			
Mobile phone		Postcode	
Email address			
Date of Birth*		National Insurance Number*	

2 Your Employment. Employer*	Location
Job Description*	Part Time YES NO

3 Sex. Male Female	Annual Basic Salary
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4 Ethnic Group. (Please specify. This information is used as part of our equal opportunities policy)

A. White	English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	Irish	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	Any other White background	
B. Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	White and Black Caribbean	White and Black African	White and Asian	Other mixed/multiple ethnic background	
C. Asian/Asian British	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Chinese	Other Asian background
D. Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	African	Caribbean	Other Black/African/Caribbean background		
E. Other ethnic group	Arab	Other ethnic group, please specify			

5 Sexual orientation (This information will be used for monitoring purposes as part of our equal opportunities policy)

Sexuality	Hetrosexual	Homosexual	Bisexual	Prefer not to say
Do you identify as transgender?	Yes	No	If you wish to be contacted with information about union activities for lesbian/gay/transgender members please tick here	

6 How do you wish to pay.	Your Pay Number
Direct Debit (you must complete form below)	Paybill Deduction (complete separate form)
I confirm my paybill mandate has been sent to my pay office. Phone Freephone 0800 376 3706 to confirm your company offers paybill facility.	

7 I undertake to abide by the rules now in force or those that are adopted.

Your signature	Date
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Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit



Please fill in the whole form including official use box using a ball point pen and Send to: RMT, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

To: The Manager	Bank/Building Society
Address	
Postcode	

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Bank/Building Society account number

Branch Sort Code

Normally your payments are made once a month to RMT. If you prefer to pay 4 weekly instead please tick

Originator's Identification Number

9	7	1	7	4	5
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Reference Number

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Your National Insurance Number

FOR RMT OFFICIAL USE ONLY

This is not part of the instruction to your Bank or Building Society.

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society. Please pay RMT Direct Debits for the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with RMT, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s)
Date

Banks and Building Societies may not accept direct debit Instructions from some types of account This guarantee should be detached and retained by the Payer.

The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit RMT Credit Union Ltd will notify you seven working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed.
- If you request RMT Credit Union Ltd to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by RMT Credit Union Ltd or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society. – If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when RMT Credit Union Ltd asks you to.
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EDITORIAL



DEFENDING WORKERS

RMT has been fighting a series of industrial battles up and down the country over systematic attacks on jobs, safety, pay and working conditions.

Whilst the long-running dispute on Southern over the attack on the guards has been centre stage, the union has fought back similar attacks on Scotrail, Virgin Trains East Coast and Eurostar.

It is clear that your union has only been able to make progress through the militancy, determination and unity of our members and we must remain vigilant for any signs of backsliding by the companies involved.

Ultimately nothing rams home the madness of two decades of rail privatisation better than the continuing shambles on Govia Thameslink – Britain's biggest rail franchise.

The systematic failures on the GTR routes have turned Britain, the nation that gave the railways to the world, into a global laughing stock. The only surprising thing is that anyone is shocked at the tragedy that it being played out daily on our tracks.

Less than 24 hours after new Transport Secretary Chris Grayling announced a further £20 million of subsidy from the taxpayer to prop up Southern/GTR the parent company itself confirmed that it had hauled in a 27 per cent increase in profits to a whacking £100 million.

Just a fraction of these subsidies and profits would be enough to guarantee a guard on every train, keep the train safe and resolve our long-running dispute with the company over the safety-critical role of our members.

The public understand exactly why we are making a stand to retain the guards. Even Tory MPs on the GTR routes, bombarded with complaints from

their constituents, have waded in demanding that the company be stripped of the franchise.

RMT is bringing the whole issue of public ownership of the rail and bus industries on to the agenda because, with the commitments from Labour under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership, there has never been a better time to harness the 70 per cent of the public who back us on this fundamental issue.

But the first line of defence is a workforce organised into a strong, determined and militant trade union. That is the case whether it be Night Tube, Freightliner Heavy Haul, the shipping industry or the battle to fight the jobs and conditions assault in our offshore energy industry.

A major focus for RMT now is the launch of our Save Our Seafarers 'SOS2020' campaign. This initiative is designed to raise the plight of our maritime industry, and the repeated attacks on the workforce, right up the political agenda.

The union is also producing new, updated charters for the various grades we operate in. These new charters were drawn up by the grades conferences which are developing into organising bodies in their own right. The people that work in these grades know best how to organise their fellow workers and what their aspirations are.

So I would ask members to think about attending their grades conference next year which start taking place from February onwards. Now now is a good time to start planning to attend in order to directly influence union policy for you and your workmates.

Mick Cash



HOLYROOD SAFER TRAINS PROTEST

RMT members protested outside the Scottish Parliament earlier this month as part of its ongoing *Safer Scottish Trains* campaign.

The key demands of the Campaign are:

- Fully accessible – for passengers with disabilities.
- Staffed by safety qualified, operationally-trained guards.
- For passenger safety and the safe despatch of trains – guards should control the train doors – making sure trains are safe to start – drivers should concentrate on driving the train.
- An urgent review of safety and service quality of existing Driver-Only Operated trains.
- No cuts to infrastructure, track workers or rail operation staff.
- Maintain and expand station staffing – we need to make sure stations are welcoming, staffed and safe.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash called for a guard on every train who is fully safety qualified and operationally

trained. That is the only way to guarantee a safe service.

“RMT is calling on the Scottish government to launch an urgent review of safety and service quality on all Scottish trains, including DOO services on the network.”

RMT is asking MSPs to sign Parliamentary Motion S5M-01161 in support of the *Safer Scottish Trains* campaign. ■

FREIGHTLINER HEAVY HAUL BALLOT OVER PAY

A ballot for industrial action is taking place at Freightliner Heavy Haul, one of the largest freight companies in the country, in a dispute over pay.

Groundstaff, shift managers, clerical and supervisory staff are all being balloted are the company to offer a pay increase.

The company then offered a 35-hour week offered with no pay increase and funded by cuts

in terms and conditions and not within the whole of the bargaining unit, an offer that was rejected by nine to one in a referendum.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that it was clear from the company accounts that despite the fact that there has been a downturn in the use of coal that the company was still showing healthy reserves and profits.

“A pay rise to keep pace with

the cost of living would be a drop in the ocean compared to the numbers on the Freightliner Heavy Haul balance sheet.

“The union also notes that Directors’ pay has shot up by nearly 30 per cent over a year showing that it is only the front-line workforce being expected to take the hit.

“RMT is aware that the company are also putting safety at risk by training scab managers – production

managers and movement inspectors – on a very short course in shunting compressing a normal 5 week course down to 3 days in an effort to break any future action.

“The union is calling for a fair pay increase that stops our members taking a hit on their standard of living.

“It is clear that a reasonable increase is affordable and that is what our members are fighting for,” he said. ■

DISABLED CAMPAIGN JOIN SOUTHERN PICKET LINES

Campaigners from Disabled People Against the Cuts (DPAC) joined RMT pickets to show their support for the fight to retain safety-critical guards on Southern Rail services.

The whole issue of disabled access to services has been carefully ignored by Southern/GTR as they have ploughed on with plans that will downgrade and remove guards from trains in the shift to Driver Only Operation.

Without a guard on board, and with the de-staffing of stations, people with disabilities will be effectively barred from using the railway in a move that the union has described as “the most blatant and cynical discrimination in the drive for profits”.

A report by a group of disability campaigners compiled last month has detailed the reality of Driver Only Operation on our railways and has drawn the following conclusions:

“GTR have made a commitment for trains to have an on-board supervisor on all trains except in ‘exceptional circumstances’. The concept of ‘exceptional circumstances’ is not one that would enable any disabled or older person to travel with confidence. It was very clear from our journeys that, at almost every stage, without the presence of staff we would have been unable to

continue to complete a journey or would have been carried beyond our destinations.

“Our wheelchair user is concerned that the company may be relying on passengers with additional needs pre-booking journeys as a reasonable adjustment. It is unlawful to deny travel to “turn up and go” passengers (like aviation’s Regulation (EC) 1107/2006) but unlike aviation there is no robust system of data collection to ensure that pre-booking makes any difference to journey success, in fact the wheelchair user we met at Chichester had done so and was still reliant on the guard.

“So we believe that if a train runs D00 to an unstaffed station with a passenger who is unable to exit the train unassisted, then an offence will be committed under the Equality Act 2010 in that it will be a “provision, criterion or practice” that puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage. This needs to be understood and acted upon both by the ORR and the Department for Transport, who are also bound by the public sector duties of the Act.

“After 30 years of commitment, effort and public expenditure to ensure that disabled people can travel by train, as by other modes, with confidence, we risk taking a significant retrograde step that



will effectively deny people those hard won rights. That is simply unacceptable,” the report said.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the union supports the points raised by disability campaigners and the conclusion that GTR plans represent an offence under the Equality Act 2010 as they will clearly put a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage.

GTR, hoarding £100 million in profits and soaking up public funds, have ignored these

points.

“That attitude is disgraceful, RMT remains available for serious talks but GTR clearly has no interest in resolving the dispute and it is also clear that the government are propping them up financially and politically.

“Just a fraction of the £100 million the GTR parent company is hoarding in profits would be enough to keep a guard on the Southern trains, keep the trains safe and accessible and resolve the dispute,” he said. ■



TAX DODGES RIFE IN NORTH SEA

A new report has lifted the lid on the secretive corporate structures and aggressive tax minimisation schemes used by Chevron and other major North Sea oil producers.

The International Transport Workers Federation report, *Offshore Oil, Offshore Tax*, has revealed that Chevron uses a complex web of companies to route money through the Netherlands, Bermuda and other tax havens and has over 200 active subsidiaries in Bermuda alone.

ITF general secretary Steve Cotton said that this was at a time when there has been a

dramatic reduction in tax revenue from the North Sea.

"In the mid 1980's, taxes on North Sea oil production accounted for nearly nine per cent of all tax receipts collected by the UK Government - today it is just 0.7 per cent.

"While production has fallen, tax revenues have fallen much further, due to tax cuts and aggressive tax minimisation schemes.

"To put this revenue slump in context British motorists paid six times more tax on petrol (\$26.9 billion in 13/14), excluding VAT, than the oil and gas industry paid on all taxes

covering North Sea oil production (\$4.4 billion in 13/14).

"It is well documented that both Shell and BP are using similar corporate structures to reduce their tax in the UK. Both BP and Shell in 2014 paid no UK corporate tax.

"I think the public will demand action from our political leaders to get to the bottom of what this report has found.

"The UK Parliament needs to establish an inquiry to investigate the corporate structures used by the oil companies operating in the

North Sea and the impact they have on security, taxes and royalties," he said.

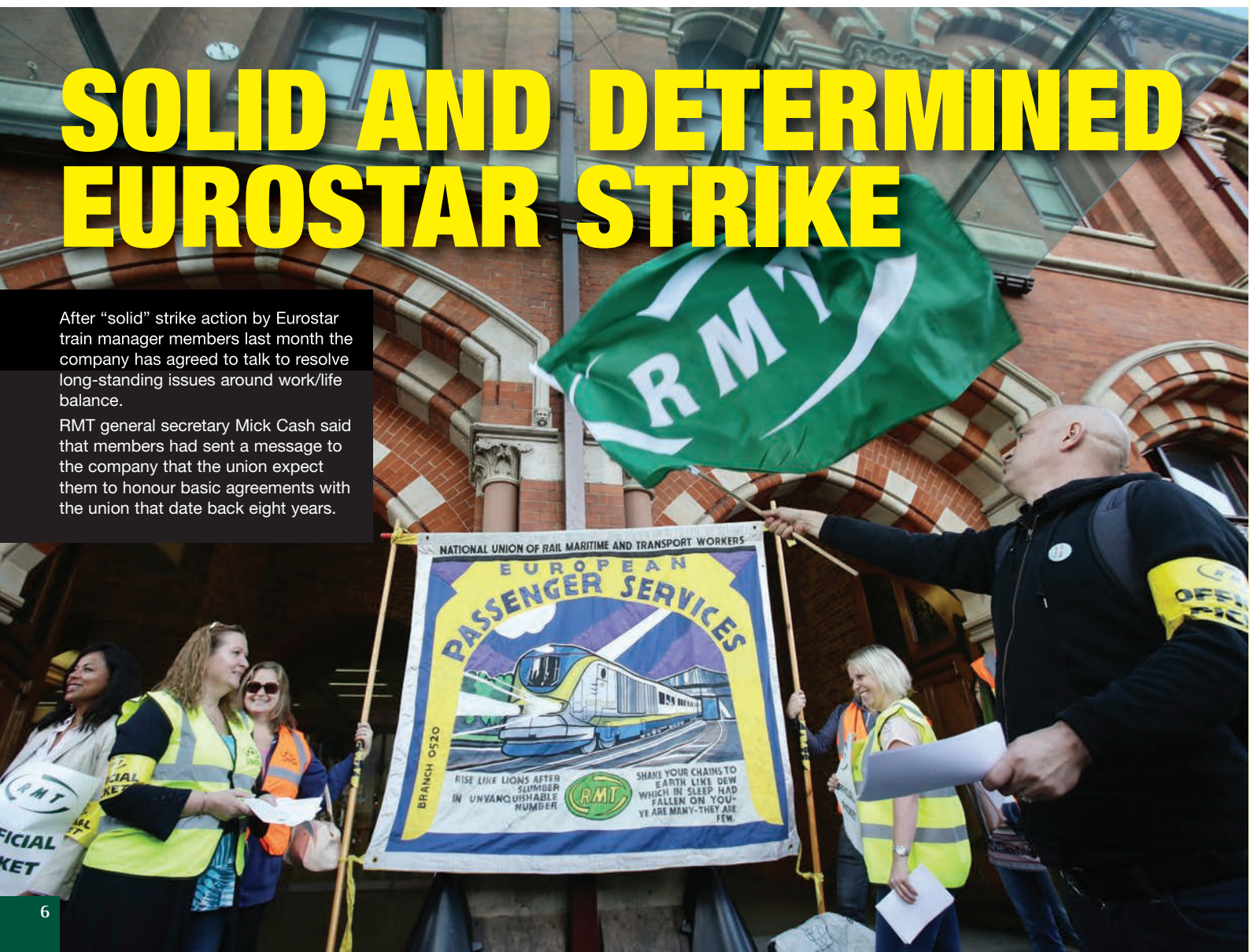
Shadow Chancellor, John McDonnell MP said that the new research blew open the complex tax avoidance measures undertaken by a major multinational.

"Anyone concerned with ending the scourge of tax avoidance needs to pay careful attention to its findings. It's time to put a stop to these complex company structures that rip off taxpayers and place extra strains on public services across the globe," he said.

SOLID AND DETERMINED EUROSTAR STRIKE

After "solid" strike action by Eurostar train manager members last month the company has agreed to talk to resolve long-standing issues around work/life balance.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that members had sent a message to the company that the union expect them to honour basic agreements with the union that date back eight years.



A CHARTER FOR ENGINEERING

Engineering grades produce charter for the industry outlining what they have got and what they want

The privatisation and break-up of the railways has brought massive change in the Fleet Engineering sector in the rail industry.

Where once there was central bargaining for standard pay and conditions RMT now negotiates with hundreds of employers, all of whom want to get as much as they can out of their staff as possible. Thousands of jobs have been stripped out and demarcation lines eroded.

For train maintenance depots, the fragmentation has resulted in vastly differing pay rates and conditions.

But RMT – the only union that unites all rail workers – has managed to maintain the fight for better pay and conditions, good pensions and safety.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said where the union was well-organised it has made great strides but more had to be done.

“RMT’s strength is that it is an industrial union, uniting people in all grades, in every depot: skilled fitters, electricians and technicians, cleaners, shunters and depot drivers, clerical staff, supervisors and team leaders.

“RMT seeks to bring all workers in the Fleet Engineering sector under the umbrella of a well organised, strong and powerful union.

“In this pamphlet we set out the RMT’s agenda and

programme for the Fleet Engineering sector that we can take forward with all of the rail companies.

“The first step towards bringing this charter to reality is to ensure that every depot worker becomes an RMT member with solid organisation in every workplace.

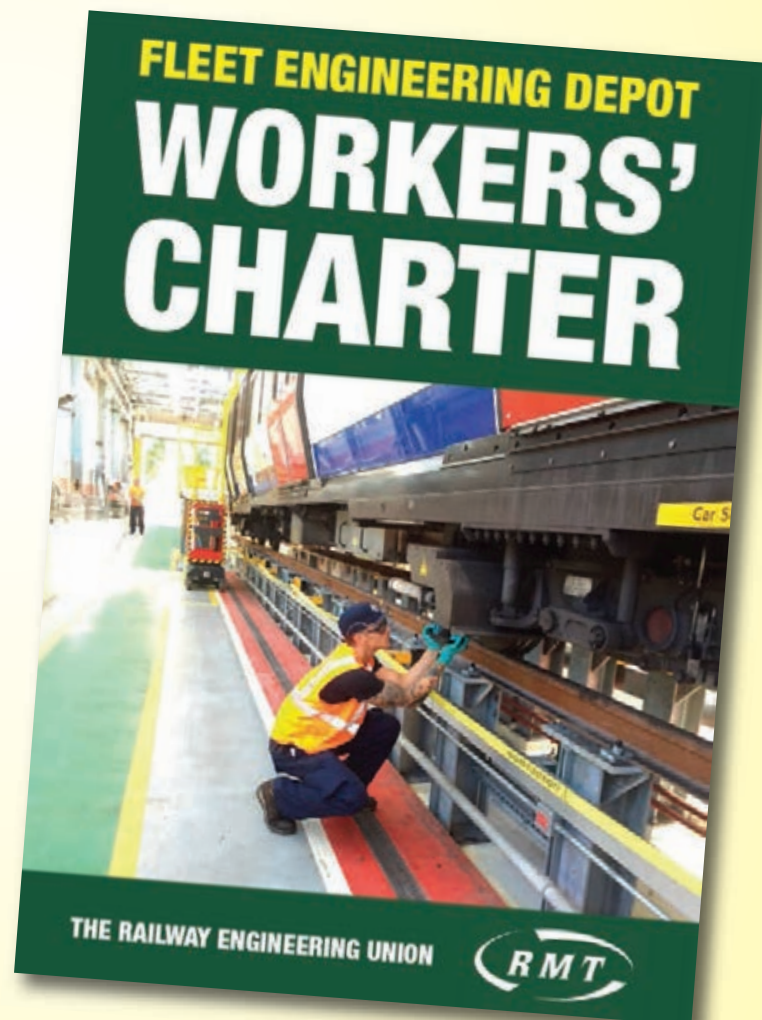
“Organised workplaces with the membership actively supporting the union’s agenda win better deals for every Fleet Engineering worker,” he said.

RMT believes that pay claims must reflect demands for the entire sector. Therefore the union is demanding inclusive basic salaries for workers on all shift patterns which do not vary enormously with every minor roster change.

RMT is also demanding final salary pension schemes, no ‘annualised hours’, paid meal and rest breaks and a reduction of the working week to 32 hours.

As well as travel facilities for all staff, annual leave should not be less than 34 days and a minimum 32-hour rest period between shifts working towards 48-hours between blocks of shifts.

There are many more demands and aspirations in the charter which is available from Unity House and on the RMT website.



PAYING MORE FOR LESS

Latest government rise means that rail fares have increased at twice the rate of wages in the past six years

RMT joined protesters at stations across England, Scotland and Wales last month against the latest rise in rail fares and for a publicly owned railway.

On August 16 the government announced a nearly two per cent increase in the cost of train tickets in line with the inflation figure used to calculate the annual rise in regulated rail fares.

Research by the *Action for Rail* campaign revealed that fares have risen at double the speed of wages – an increase of 25 per cent in the last six years, yet average weekly wages have only gone up by 12 per cent.

While passengers pay more for rail services, dividends paid to rail company shareholders increased by 21 per cent in the past year to £222 million.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that passengers were paying more, but getting less.

“Not only that but more ticket offices are closing, guards are being removed from trains, driver-only operations are being extended and there are fewer staff at stations to provide help

when required.

“The train companies are putting profit before affordable fares and passenger safety yet government is sticking to this failed privatisation model, even though 62 per cent of the public support returning rail to public ownership,” he said.

Campaigners at London Bridge station were joined by Labour party leader Jeremy Corbyn MP, Shadow Transport Secretary Andy McDonald MP and Green Party leader Natalie Bennett, who support the call for affordable rail fares under a publicly owned railway.

Southern Railway commuters also shared their frustration about the continued delays and cuts to train services.

Action for Rail spokesman Philip Hadley said that Southern Rail was a franchising failure which needed to be brought under public ownership.

“We know public ownership can work – evidence shows that the publicly owned East Coast was a success story before being moved back under a private company,” he said.





PUTTING THE PUBLIC BACK INTO TRANSPORT

On the day of rail fare rises last month Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn outlined the need for publicly-owned transport

Britain's public transport system is becoming a national embarrassment. Our railway network is now the most expensive in Europe – whilst taxpayers and passengers get a bad deal.

Our bus services are facing cuts which threaten to leave low income and rural communities cut off, with too little local democratic municipal control.

Whether it's buses or trains, the issue is the same. Transport is something which should be run as a public service for everyone's benefit. Instead, we're spending millions every year subsidising the profits of private companies, whilst all too often passengers are left frustrated as their local services are removed or not properly funded, fares keep going up, and staffing levels are cut.

Under the next Labour government, all of that will change.

A plan to rebuild and

transform our transport services:

- Bring Britain's railways into public ownership
- Raise enough money from public ownership to cut rail fares by as much as 10%
- Create an integrated rail system, which is more accessible, more easily understood and in which passengers and staff have a real say
- Shifting from the expensive and wasteful rolling stock leasing system to buying trains outright and using government purchasing to support UK train building.
- Greater public control over new train orders can ensure better value train manufacturing in the long run as well as enabling a more strategic approach to rolling stock that supports UK manufacturing.
- Give all councils the power to set up publicly run

municipal bus companies

- Unlock more than £500m every year to invest in increasing bus routes and capacity
- Save 2.8bn over the next decade which would otherwise have gone directly into dividends for private shareholders in private bus companies

These should not be radical policies. In Germany, 88 per cent of local public transport is run by publicly owned companies.

A large proportion of Britain's railways are already run by the state – just publicly owned Train Operating companies from other European countries. Just a few years ago East Coast Rail – having failed drastically in private train operators hands, was run more successfully, more efficiently, and with higher passenger satisfaction levels as a public

company.

This public rail company also returned record amounts of money back to the Government compared to the previous private operator until the Tories re-privatised it.

So, it's just common sense, with a pragmatic, tested model used around the world that means we can have a People's Railway our country deserves and which we can all be proud of under a future Labour Government.

An expansion in public transport capacity is essential if we are to tackle climate change, and we will make sure that every pound we invest creates jobs, improves infrastructure and boosts the economy.

We need a Labour government that is willing to do the common sense thing – rebuild and transform Britain's public transport system by bringing it into public ownership. ■

A NEW DEAL FOR CLEANERS



New London mayor agrees on action for a fairer deal for cleaners on London Underground

Incoming London mayor Sadiq Khan has met with RMT and agreed to ensure that London Underground cleaners get a fairer deal.

It is the first time for over eight years that a London mayor has sat down to discuss industrial matters. Soon after Sadiq Khan he immediately reversed the previous Tory regime's policy of refusing to speak to trade unions about workplace issues.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash and London regional organiser John Leach met the new mayor shortly after he was elected.

Mr Khan, the son of a London bus driver, said that he was a trade unionist and committed to improving the lot of LUL workers and looked forward to a new kind of relations with RMT.

John Leach, who began his working life as a Tube cleaner, outlined the conditions these vulnerable workers operated in.

He said that over 2,700 cleaners turned up every day to clean the London Underground and many were super-exploited agency workers.

"Work is currently outsourced to Interserve though the contract comes to an end next February.

"Yet it is has commenced consultation about even more cuts to wages and staffing, placing a heavy strain on workers.

"We are talking about some of the most vulnerable workers on the UK transport network. They are not typically UK nationals and are not best placed to defend their rights and are often short-changed and bullied," he told the mayor.

He also invited him to meet with a selection of cleaners in order to hear their testimonies first hand. Mr Leach also called for greater career progression opportunities such as he had enjoyed when cleaning was

carried out by LUL itself.

The mayor said that he was concerned with the "challenging" conditions for staff and said that the wellbeing of TfL's direct employees and those employed by suppliers were a "top priority".

He reported that LUL managing director Mark Wild had met with Interserve and raised the mayor's concerns.

As a result Interserve has committed to reducing the number of agency staff to under 25 per cent, down from the 50 per cent when it took over the contract in 2014.

LUL has also said that any new contract will require that a minimum of 80 per cent of staff must be directly employed by the contractor.

Mr Wild will also hold regular meetings in the future with the union over the issue.

More broadly Mayor Khan has asked TfL to look into the introduction of ethical procurement standards to establish pay levels, working conditions and welfare standards for contractors, sub-contractors and any agency staff used.

Mick Cash said that, ultimately, the union wanted to see cleaning contracts brought back in-house.

He explained that there was an economic case for doing so.

"TfL has competence to control and carry out this work itself, it does not need to hire another organisation to do it.

"It would be cheaper than outsourcing the work. This is reflected that high director's pay and shareholder dividends which clearly demonstrates that outsourcing companies are ripping off the public purse," he said.

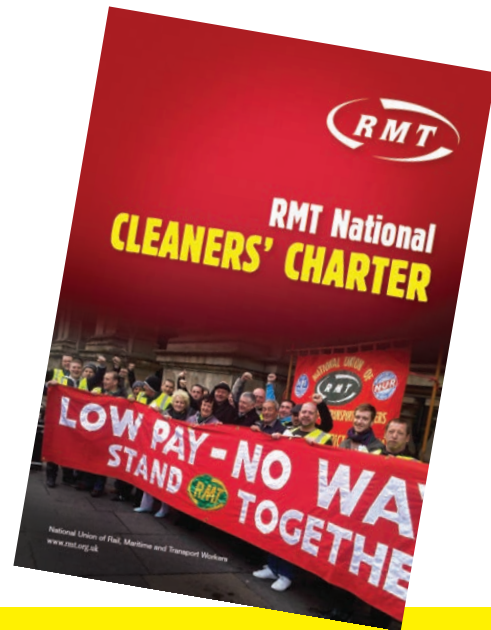
Mr Cash pointed out that LUL had already taken a number of contracts in-house in recent years which had made services more efficient and economic through removing the expense

of contractual interfaces and having more direct control over costs and work programmes.

The union is also calling for cleaners who are required to work nights to receive anti-social hours payments instead of

the flat rate currently paid.

RMT also wants free travel passes for cleaners which could be provided with virtually no cost to TfL but would make a substantial difference to the workforce. ■



THE RMT CLEANERS' CHARTER

What the union wants:

- A living wage increasing to an eventual £12.50 per hour
- All cleaning contracts to be taken back in house
- An annual increase in pay
- A simple career path
- A decent pension
- Free travel on the railways
- Safe travel to and from work
- Safe & healthy working conditions
- An additional payment for late night or weekend work
- 22 days basic annual leave plus eight bank holidays
- A fair sick pay scheme
- A reduction in working hours without loss of pay
- Dignity and respect at work
- Clean mess rooms
- Regular provision of uniform/full PPE



TUBE LINES BACK IN-HOUSE NEXT YEAR

Final end to the disastrous legacy left by the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) experiment by 2017

A long-running RMT campaign has scored a significant victory with the final confirmation from the London Mayor that a major slice of tube maintenance work is to be brought back in-house next year.

RMT has welcomed this news that Transport for London will manage maintenance work on the Jubilee, Northern and Piccadilly lines through its own in-house management team.

The contract dates back to the failed tube maintenance privatisation programme and for the past 13 years the private company Amey has been contracted to manage maintenance work across the three lines – a legacy of the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) contract that previously existed between Tube Lines and London Underground.

However this arrangement will now be brought to an end at the end of next year – the earliest possible point the contract allows.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that it was a massive victory for RMT in terms of the

fight to end profiteering and privatisation on London Underground.

“This move helps to bring closer the end to the crazy experiment of tube maintenance privatisation and is another nail in the coffin of the tube PPP disaster.

“It makes no sense at all having maintenance work hived off to private operators and RMT will continue the fight across the rail industry for these works, and all other supporting services, to come under the public sector, under direct public control with the staff jobs, pay and conditions protected,” he said.

London Mayor Sadiq Khan said that he was “proud” that TfL would be bringing Tube maintenance work back into the public sector.

“I’ve asked TfL to carry out a root-and-branch review of all its business operations, and the decision to bring underground maintenance work in-house will save tens of millions of pounds to invest in our transport network and pay for my freeze in TfL fares.

“London Underground already has experience running successful maintenance operations in-house, and we’re making the changes as soon as the contract allows.

“I want TfL to be the best in the world while staying in public control,” he said.

In June, shortly after taking office, the Mayor ordered a root and branch review of TfL including eliminating unnecessary duplication in its operations, obtaining greater value from its procurement activity, and significantly cutting reliance on agency staff.

London Underground already has experience of bringing operations back in-house following the demise of Metronet in 2007. Since then costs have reduced and performance has improved compared to the PPP era. Reliability on the Tube has improved by 38 per cent since 2011 alone.

In total, managing the work in-house is expected to save at least £80 million over the next decade. TfL and LU do not make

a profit, with all savings and revenue put back into the transport network and freezing TfL fares.

Mark Wild, London Underground’s Managing Director, said that TfL would be working closely with Amey over the next 18 months to ensure a smooth transition.

The PPP was devised by the New Labour government supposedly to attract private sector investment for infrastructure and avoiding such schemes ending up on the government’s balance sheet.

Instead of having conventional contracts whereby the public body – LUL – simply specified the work and put it out to tender, the idea was to privatise the infrastructure for a 30-year period and “incentivise” the contractors to take a long-term view of the assets.

This enabled London Underground to remain publicly owned while the maintenance and the massive renewal programme was carried out by privately run companies with disastrous results. ■

THE SORRY HISTORY OF PPP

The origins of the public-private partnership (PPP) go back to 1997 when the then Tory Secretary of State for Transport, Sir George Young announced proposals to privatise London Underground based on the disastrous EU rail model already imposed on Britain's railways.

EU directive 91/440 and subsequent EU rail packages encourage the splitting of rail infrastructure and operations, handing them over to the private sector and hiving off individual lines or groups of lines to franchisees to run the trains.

The 1997 Conservative election manifesto promised that privatisation would bring in funds to modernise the network within five years. To compete with this the Labour manifesto proposed its own version, the PPP.

Following a Labour victory the incoming government appointed Price Waterhouse accountants to provide financial advice on how to impose PPP's on the Tube.

However resistance to the part privatisation grew with RMT general secretary Jimmy Knapp giving evidence to a House of Commons committee opposing the moves.

On June 15 1998 RMT held the first of a number of 48-hour Tube strikes to demand no compulsory redundancies, and over safety.

Resistance continued after the former Labour MP Ken Livingstone, running as an independent, was elected as the first Mayor of London on May 4 2000 on a platform of opposing PPP as it would fragment management and operational structures.

After the Hatfield rail accident he also supported a motion by the London Labour Party calling on the government to abandon its plans for the PPP on safety grounds.

Nevertheless in May 2001 Tube Lines was announced as the preferred bidder for Infracore JNP (the Jubilee, Northern and Piccadilly Lines) and Metronet the preferred bidder for Infracore BCV (the Bakerloo, Circle and District Lines).

On July 30 2001 Mr Justice Sullivan dismissed an application by Transport for London for a judicial review of the decision by LUL and London Regional Transport to enter into the PPP.

TfL had submitted that the PPP contracts, under which it would be bound for 30 years, would make it impossible to implement the transport strategy formulated by the new mayor.

Despite reports of financial problems at Amey, part of the Tube Lines consortium, Tube Lines sealed the contract to upgrade the Jubilee, Northern and Piccadilly lines and responsibility for the JNP infraco in December 2002.

The final stage of the PPP was completed on April 2003 when Metronet signed the 30-year contract with LUL for the upgrade of the BCV and the Sub Surface Lines (SSL).

The Public Accounts Committee consequently published a report on the PPP in March 2005 that was heavily critical of how the PPP had been put together.

These concerns centred on its complexity – the PPP contracts comprised 135 separate contract documents with more than 2,800 pages of contract terms – as well as

safety implications, high costs, unambitious targets and high profits for the consortiums with very little risk involved.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown ignored the warnings and pushed through the contracts because he did not want the much-needed LUL upgrade on the government's balance sheets.

However, by 2007 Metronet went into administration and Transport for London took over

its contracts. In 2009 Tube Lines too had a funding shortfall and requested more public money and in May 2010 TfL had bought out Tube Lines.

Last month Transport for London finally announced that it would bring Tube Lines maintenance work on the Jubilee, Northern and Piccadilly lines back in-house by 2017 to finally end the chaos caused by the PPP.



How RMT News saw PPP

RMT STANDS UP FOR ITS MEMBERS

If you have suffered an avoidable injury or illness, our team of expert lawyers can help you

The law says you're entitled to compensation for illnesses or injuries caused by the negligence of others. And because the RMT only uses expert personal injury lawyers, you can be sure of a service that is second to none.

Contact us now for fast and efficient advice – even for your family members.

FOR THE BEST LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR RMT MEMBERS CALL FREE ON 0845 712 5495 (0800 328 1014 in Scotland). Lines open 8.00am-8.00pm Mon-Fri (except public holidays) and 9.00am-5.00pm Sat and Sun. For the 24 hour criminal law line call 0765 911 8181 (0800 328 1014 in Scotland)

T THOMPSONS
SOLICITORS

m Drummond Miller
Solicitors and Estate Agents

PROTECTING AND PROMOTING OUR MEMBERS' INTERESTS





TOGETHER: Former RMT president Tony Donaghey with Maria and Robertson Xavier at the Euston station ceremony last month.

BREAKING THE COLOUR BAR

On the 50th anniversary of the union defeating the colour bar at Euston station, EC member Eddie Dempsey tells the story

On August 15 1966 the colour bar at Euston station and St Pancras goods station was defeated when Asquith Xavier, the West Indian guard initially refused a job, was finally allowed to start work.

British Railways had announced that after negotiations with local leaders of the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) that no grade would in future be closed on racial grounds anywhere in the London division.

Black workers had been barred from taking jobs as guards and porters at Euston Station and St. Pancras while Irish workers at Paddington were restricted to labouring roles in the goods yard and similar restrictions applied at other stations.

Asquith Xavier was 46 and had come to Britain from Dominica, the largest of the Windward Isles in the eastern Caribbean. He had started work for British Railways in 1956 as a

continued overleaf



VICTORY: Asquith Xavier, the first black guard at Euston Station, arrives at work on August 15 1966 to collect his equipment from Guards Inspector Philip Howard.

porter, working his way up to rail guard at Marylebone station, where there was no colour bar.

But as far back as June 20 1961 The Communist Party newspaper *The Daily Worker* reported that the South Paddington Labour Party had requested that BR investigate the ban on employment of coloured workers at Paddington Station.

This followed a statement by British Rail Western region staff officer to the press stating..."All things being equal, we prefer taking on white people....they are preferred to coloured people for reasons of intelligence and education".

Asquith's own battle began when the Beeching cuts shut the Great Central Line creating a surplus of guards at Marylebone and he had begun to apply for moves to other stations including Euston.

But he received a letter telling him that he had been rejected for the job at Euston because of the ban on 'coloured men'. The insulting letter explained coloured people were 'unsuited to interfacing with the general public'.

Asquith's workmate Tony Donaghey, a young guard that went on to become RMT president, had been given a letter of allocation offering him a guard job at Euston. But he was approached by his NUR branch secretary Jimmy Prendergast who asked to refuse the offer on the grounds of discrimination.

Tony remembers Jimmy as a well-respected activist, whose politics and military service history were well known.

Jim had joined the Communist Party in his native Ireland at a very young age and had fought the fascists on the streets of Dublin before he enlisted in the International Brigade to fight in Spain.

He came to Britain to find work in the late 1930s and fought Mosley's Blackshirts at the battle of Cable Street before joining the RAF to fight in the Battle of Britain.

Jim Prendergast and the Marylebone branch took up Asquith's case immediately with the BR Board and the NUR union as a national issue. Jim also leaked the story to a sympathetic journalist on Fleet Street, resulting in a national

scandal that forced BR to relent.

A British Rail spokesperson at the time insisted the ban, which had been in place for 12 years, had not been a "real" colour bar but "instigated by the workers out of a desire to protect their jobs".

The media of the day attempted to paint a picture of a benevolent BR intervening against racist railway workers.

But Tony is clear that this was simply a myth.

"This was a victory for our class and we must challenge the lie peddled that this was something gifted to us by the bosses.

"The working class cannot be held responsible for the imperialism of their ruling class which creates racism in society, in fact, it was the workers who resisted it.

"Workers' attitudes often reflect society, but that was the general situation in industry - not this false claim that there were 'racist stations' and it was the unions that ultimately fought the colour bar," he said.

After Asquith took up his duties in 1966 an inquiry into discrimination found that colour bars were in place in several



Jimmy Prendergast

London stations from Camden to Broad Street and BR promised to lift these as well.

But the victory also led to the 1968 Race Relations Act and the creation of the Commission for Racial Equality.

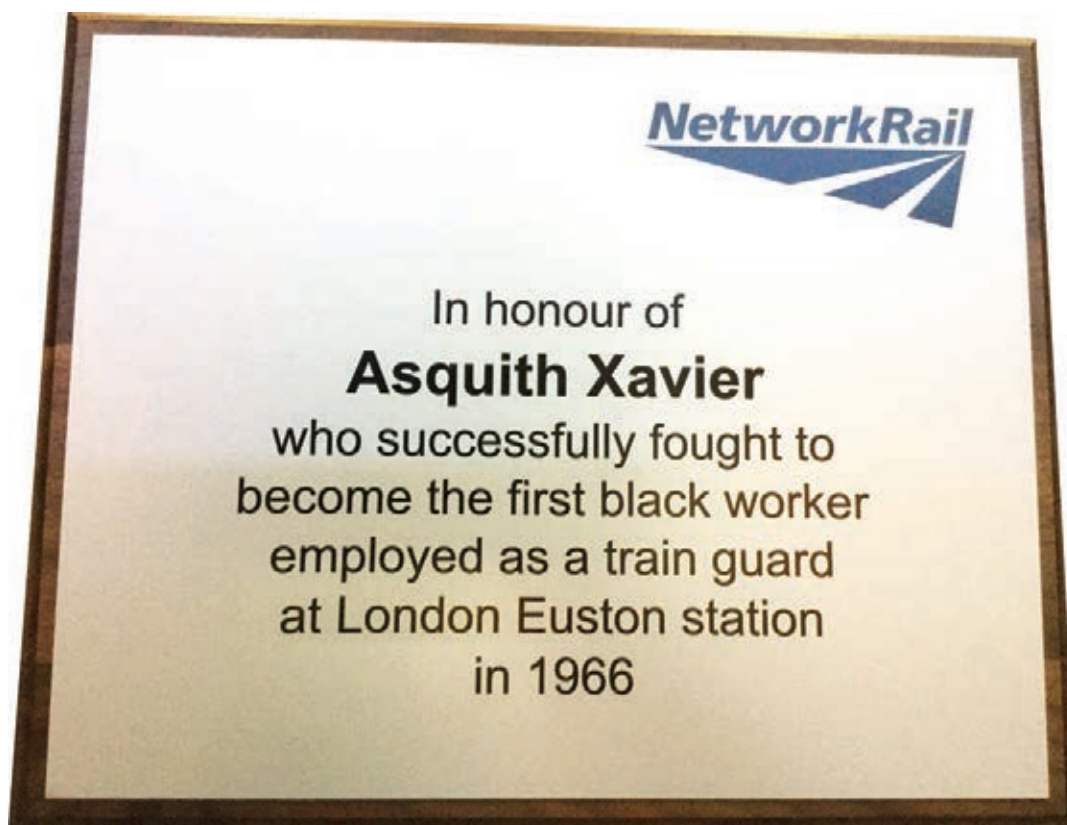
The first Race Relations Act passed in 1965 made it illegal to "refuse anyone access, on racial grounds, to public places such as hotels, pubs, restaurants, cinemas, public transport or any place run by a public authority". But the legislation did not apply to the workplace.

Following the Asquith case, a new Race Relations Act made it illegal to refuse housing, employment or public services to people because of their ethnic background.

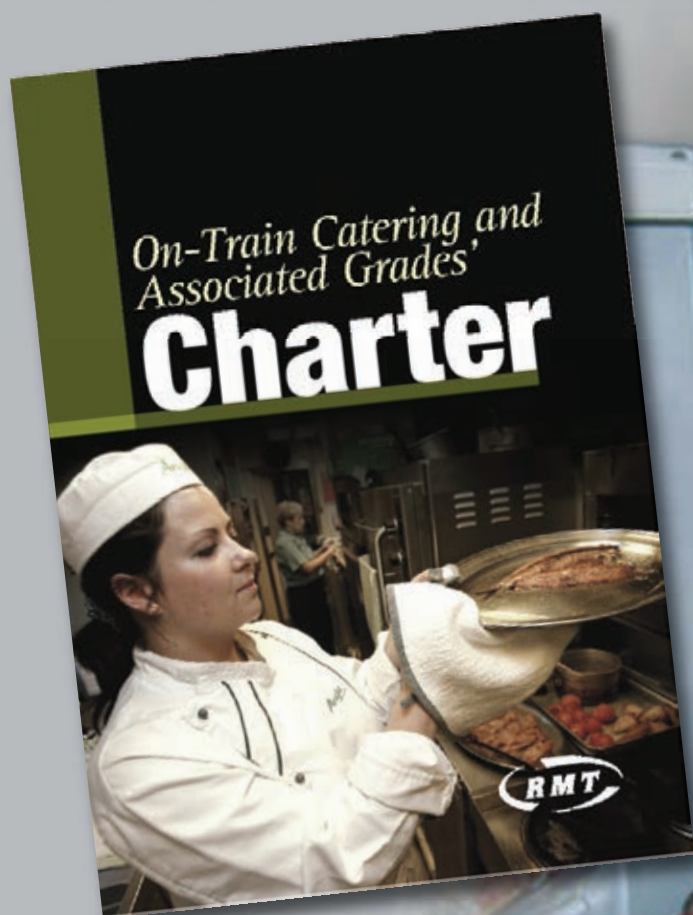
Presenting the Bill to Parliament, then Home Secretary Jim Callaghan said: "The House has rarely faced an issue of greater social significance for our country and our children".

At a recent Network Rail ceremony attended by Asquith's family at Euston station to unveil a plaque, his son Robertson and daughter Maria thanked the union for standing with their father against racial discrimination at a difficult time.

"It was a fight that had to be fought and my father's union stood by him and we are eternally grateful for that," said Robertson. ■



FIGHTING FOR CATERING WORKERS



Catering workers launch their charter outlining how to get a better deal

Train passengers want decent catering facilities and good customer service but private train operators are not the business to provide a public service.

Their primary consideration is to maximise ticket revenue and profit for shareholders. Therefore, catering facilities can be vulnerable as the pressure to increase seating capacity and strip out costs intensifies.

Some train companies have already reduced and even removed catering provision from their services. Any remaining catering staff are expected to work harder, with fewer facilities and on overcrowded trains making it impossible to even move a trolley through carriages.

Inevitably the high standard of customer services will suffer and travelling by train will become less attractive.

Southern/Thameslink Railways and their catering company Rail Gourmet announced that the catering contract was to be axed in July 2015 with just four days' notice given to staff.

Great Western surveyed passengers stating that it wished to trial a new standard trolley without mentioning that this would mean withdrawal of buffet cars.

It is now seeking to withdraw catering provision on some services out of Paddington and only provide the trolley service. These cuts demonstrate that operators have no desire to provide passengers with the best possible service and those travelling long distances will be particularly adversely affected.

RMT demands the retention and expansion of restaurant cars, buffet cars, shops, and cafe areas wherever they are present. The union is also lobbying operators and the Department

for Transport to ensure full catering provision, of at least the current level, is incorporated into the design of all future rolling stock for all routes.

The experience of long distance rail passengers in this country compares very poorly with inter-city routes in Europe where quality catering services are integral to the service. In Spain for instance, there are often two buffet cars on each high speed train.

For catering employees the buffet car provides a guarantee of job security and a place of safety because it avoids the serious problem of lone working experienced by both trolley operation and the Guard.

Buffet cars are essential for refrigeration which is impossible on a trolley and provides a work hub from which a proper and effective service can be offered to the passengers, whatever the level of passenger loading. Dedicated staff toilets should also be provided to ensure the highest standards of hygiene.

UNITED IN A UNION

Where their position should be celebrated by train operators as an important part of the on-board team, catering staff instead find themselves under threat; their wages desperately low.

Greedy operators will cut back catering facilities to squeeze profits out of the railway if they think they can get away with it as is being seen with the Great Western attempt to get rid of buffet cars and introduce trolley only services on some routes.

That's why there's never been a more critical time for a catering worker and those associated grades working in the supply chain to be part of the union and to get involved in

campaigns. Only RMT can bring all grades together in defence of rail services simply because we represent all grades of transport worker.

RMT will do whatever it can industrially and politically, to safeguard catering jobs and it succeeds – Virgin East Coast have retained Buffet cars on their trains after a strong RMT political lobbying and public awareness campaign.

Being part of RMT means a whole lot more than fighting against cuts to catering services. It means belonging to a union which is positively working to improve workplace conditions, your rates of pay and health and safety.

But the union can't do any of these things without organising

throughout the catering grades and this Charter sets out exactly why every caterer should belong to RMT.

It originated from the catering grades' conference and has been drawn together with the assistance of catering activists.

RMT members have the power to shape the policy of the union by going along to your branch meetings and playing an active part. Whilst this Charter is aimed at on-train catering grades, the union's overall aim is to organise and represent all catering staff whether they work on the trains, supply trains, or in station outlets.

Copies of the charter are available from Unity House and on the RMT website. ■

RMT DEMANDS FOR ON-TRAIN CATERING GRADES MEMBERS

Your union's demands: -

- Retention of on-train catering facilities at the current level
- No trolley service to be introduced without prior agreement with the RMT or at the expense of other services
- Trolley service to be a maximum of 11 hours
- All trolleys to have safe and secure money box facilities
- Extra pay protection for low paid catering grades
- Decent conditions of service including full travel facilities and pensions
- Adequate staffing levels
- Additional rest periods during periods of disruption
- Paid training including First Aid training
- An end to contract catering and for the direct employment of all agency staff
- The highest possible health and safety standards including dedicated staff toilets for catering staff
- Staff to be provided with free food to avoid risk of cross contamination with other food
- A Charter of Protection to properly address workplace violence
- Minimum rest breaks and improved staff facilities



24 REASONS TO BE

There are many good reasons to be an RMT member and below are just 24 of them

1. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

The union has a dedicated team of elected officers and local reps to serve your interests negotiating with employers on issues from pay, hours of work, pensions and working conditions. They are supported by a team of researchers to formulate pay claims to obtain the best negotiated terms for you.

2. SUPPORT IN THE WORKPLACE

RMT has a national network of 230 branches organised under regional councils aimed at providing local support. Every member has their own branch secretary to provide immediate support and advice in the workplace. The union has health and safety at work representatives coordinated from head office to ensure safety is given due priority by employers and risk is properly managed. RMT's equal opportunities specialists also provide support to ensure fairness and help to stamp out bullying and harassment.

3. HELPLINE 0800 376 3706.

A freephone members' helpline staffed by experts in the industrial relations department advises members on all work related and membership enquiries. Lines are open Monday to Friday 0800 hours to 1800 hours and Saturdays 0930 hours to 1600 hours.

4. ADVICE LINE 0800 376 3706 (ENGLAND & WALES) 0800 328 1014 (SCOTLAND)

If you have a query on any topic besides workplace issues, members can ring up the Advice helpline. RMT provides initial advice on personal and domestic matters such as divorce, property purchases, debt etc and can point you in the direction of professional bodies and solicitors.

5. CRIMINAL CHARGES 0765 911 8181

Should a member or family members find themselves arrested by the police or questioned under caution, RMT's Criminal helpline can give initial advice and the

provision of a duty solicitor should the need arise. Members who are charged with crimes at or connected to work and who are not guilty can be considered for legal representation. All legal representation is discretionary and according to Rule. General criminal queries can also be dealt with on this number. Lines are open 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.

6. INDUSTRIAL DISEASES

Members who have suffered an industrial disease will receive free legal support to make a claim. Such claims are underwritten by the union and members will not have any deduction from their settlement unlike claims run by no-win, no-fee companies. Call 08457 125 495

7. PERSONAL INJURIES

Personal injury claims cover if you suffer an accident in work or outside work. RMT underwrites settlements that would not be provided by no-win, no-fee companies. Call 08457 125 495

8. EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNALS

Should a member find themselves unfairly dismissed, discriminated against or have any claim which has reasonable prospects of success at an Employment Tribunal, RMT will provide legal representation and pay the fee. Even if the union is advised that the claim is unlikely to succeed, members who make a claim are eligible to receive free legal advice.

9. DONCASTER EDUCATION CENTRE

The union has an Education Centre in Doncaster offering a range of courses for activists to increase our professionalism in the workplace. The centre has an Information Technology suite which is a valuable training resource together with video linkage to headquarters enabling conferences with the general secretary and other officials. From January members will be able to book places on courses online subject to subsequent Branch approval.



A MEMBER OF RMT

10 ACCIDENT BENEFIT

Payable if you have an accident at work or on the way to or from work. Accident benefit is only payable if you have been off for three days or more. Accident must be reported to branch secretary within 26 weeks in order to qualify for accident benefit.

11 RETIREMENT BENEFIT

Payable to any member who retires over the age of 60, or aged 55 if retired through redundancy or resettlement. Ill health retirement also payable; proof of this must be sent with application for retirement benefit.

12 DEMOTION COMPENSATION

Payable to any member who is experiencing loss of wages through being permanently demoted or downgraded as a result of illness or injury. Payment of £300 provided that member reports this to Branch Secretary within 12 weeks.

13 DEATH GRANT

If a member dies in service (i.e. not retired) then £600 is payable to the members' next of kin. Documents to be sent in with application for death grant would be death certificate and copy of will or probate, if neither are available, a copy of the funeral invoice will suffice.

14 ORPHAN FUND

The beneficiaries of this fund would be any child of a member or spouse if the member dies in service or if a members' spouse dies and the member has

responsibility of the children.

Benefit is paid while a child is in full-time education up until the age of 22. Payment is made quarterly and the rate is £12.00 per week for children up to the age of 16, then £12.75 per week from 16 to 22.

15 OLD AGE GRANT

This one-off grant is payable to shippers who, at the time of the merger of NUR/NUS (September 1990) had twenty years continuous service. This benefit is paid out at retirement age of 65. If a member retires before that age, they can elect to either wait until they are 65 and receive Old Age Grant, or waive the right to this benefit and receive normal Retirement Benefit. A claim for this benefit must be made within six months of the claimant attaining the qualifying age.

16 FUNERAL GRANT

On the death of a member of the Shipping Grade who had had twenty years service at the time of the NUR/NUS merger and was five years or less from the relevant age of retirement, the sum of £200.00 is payable to the person or persons nominated to receive said Funeral Grant.

17 CAMPAIGNING

The union has a political fund to run campaigns and provide a political voice to benefit members' interests in the workplace. RMT has a very active parliamentary group which raises issues of concern for members in the House of

Commons at Westminster, the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly

18 FINES POOL

The Fines Pool is administered from Head Office and will become open to more members. If you drive a company vehicle as part of your job and are an RMT member, then you can join the Fines Pool. The fund will reimburse members for fines incurred under the Road Traffic Act during the course of your employment, court costs, and lost time to attend court hearing. This excludes offences involving drink or drugs, smoking, mobile phones, seat belts, parking fines, or violations of the Driving Hours Regulations.

19 RMT NEWS

Members will receive a lively informative journal delivered direct to you containing industrial, social and political updates on major issues affecting workers. There are 10 editions each year plus a free diary packed with useful information. Regular newsletters are also produced for the various grades of RMT member.

20 WEBSITE

RMT's revamped popular website www.rmt.org.uk is full of industry information as well as a members-only area. This gives you access to a continually updated pay and conditions database and you can view various RMT conferences, including the AGM. You can also debate union-

related issues through the members' forum and view and update your own membership details.

21 CREDIT UNION

RMT has its own Credit Union, run by members for members. It offers a savings and loan scheme at competitive rates of interest on a not for profit basis. Members can also access their account through the RMT website.

22 THE RMT PREPAID PLUS CARD

Earn between 3% and 6% cashback when you use the RMT Prepaid Plus MasterCard® card to shop at retail partners. There is no limit to how much cashback you can earn, all this for £1.95 per month! There is no application fee or credit checks.* This card is different to debit or credit cards, you load money before you spend so there's less chance of going over your budget.

23 RMTREWARDS.COM

RMT Rewards gives you cashback, discounts and loads of great deals for your online shopping. Plus, to help you get started, you'll receive a FREE £10 welcome bonus in your rewards account - just for signing up on www.RMTRewards.com

24 TAX AND WILL PREPARATION

The union can provide a personal taxation service and will preparation service.

CALLING ALL SHIPPERS

RMT has launched a regular e-communication dedicated to campaigns and activities in the maritime industry. RMT Seafarer gets the message out to members and encourage their participation in the fight to protect jobs and secure a future for UK ratings.

The major focus is the launch of the Save Our Seafarers "SOS2020" campaign. This initiative is designed to raise the plight of our maritime industry and the repeated attacks on the

workforce.

RMT Seafarer outlines the hard facts about just how our maritime industry faces being run into the ground between now and 2020 through a combination of demographics, a lack of planning and investment and a wilful bending of every rule in the book to undermine pay and conditions and extend the scourge of social dumping.

Members can submit articles and ideas to theseafarer@rmt.org.uk



REMEMBERING JIMMY KNAPP

Friends and colleagues gathered at the graveside of former RMT general secretary Jimmy Knapp last month to mark the 15th anniversary of his passing.

Glasgow Shipping Branch

JIMMY - STILL ON MY MIND

Jimmy in Kilmarnock earth
Jimmy on my mind
In Hurlford, village of your birth
Back among your kind

Flying hair and gravel voice
Jimmy on my mind
Gentle man, for you no choice
But helping humankind

Massive man, with giant's heart
Jimmy on my mind
Still beside me, though apart
Clasped close by years that bind

From signal box to signal life
Jimmy on my mind
Railmen's leader, stretched by strife
Honed bright by days of grind

Yet no rasped edges, like flint knapped
Jimmy on my mind

members laid a wreath and retired seafarer and RMT member Stuart Hislop read out a poem by Jimmy's friend and former UNISON general secretary Rodney Bickerstaffe.

Your soft humility was capped
And scarved by laughter kind
You strove so all would go first class
Jimmy on my mind
For you your class was first and last
Your credo underlined

We've stood on platforms, done the lot
Jimmy on my mind
We've missed the train, sometimes the plot
We've struck, we've marched, we've signed

Your station too, someday I'll reach
Jimmy on my mind
Til then your friendship, looks and speech
With me safe left behind
Jimmy still on my mind

Rodney Bickerstaffe Brighton TUC 2001





OZ COURT WIN AGAINST SOCIAL DUMPING

Australian unions win court battle to prevent employers bringing in non-unionised cheap labour

The International Transport Workers' Federation welcomed a decision by Australia's High Court this month to rule invalid a decision by the nation's conservative government to exempt workers on vessels in the offshore oil and gas industry from domestic visa requirements.

The exemption, granted by the Immigration Minister Peter Dutton last year was overturned by the High Court following a case lodged by the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) and Australian Maritime Officers Union (AMOU).

The long-running saga was

thwarted first by the Australian Senate in July 2014 and then the full federal court in March 2015 but the decision in the High Court was unanimous.

ITF President and MUA national secretary Paddy Crumlin said that bringing in often exploited foreign workers was a dangerous attack on the rights and safe working conditions of seafarers, regardless of their nationality.

"The ITF welcomes the decision which helps rehabilitate Australia's international reputation for adversarial and destructive attacks on the trade union movement.

"The offshore industry in any country's territory must be the domain of the national workforce as it involves the development of that country's sovereign and public wealth," he said.

AMOU President Tim Higgs said that the government had hugely overreached with these tricky legislative instruments.

"The Minister's attempt to bypass existing law and give unfettered work rights to non-Australian workers was always a terrible idea," he said.

The MUA also organised a demonstration last year outside of Macquarie Bank HQ in

Sydney to show solidarity with RMT Southampton shipping branch's campaign to highlight Condor Ferries 'ships of shame' which discriminate against UK seafarers.

The protest was also an ITF fight to stop union busting and poor treatment of workers in the port of Gdansk, Poland by DCT.

Condor and DCT are owned by Macquarie Bank an Australian financial services and asset management company which exploit workers and communities wherever they operate.



MERCHANT NAVY DAY

RMT assistant general secretary Mark Carden laid a wreath at Trinity Gardens during Merchant Navy Memorial Day earlier this month. Pictured with him are Jim Fitzpatrick MP and Ann Jones speaker for the Welsh Assembly.



RMT members Laszlo Doyne and Clive Travers were successful in their Employment Tribunal claims for automatic unfair dismissal, breach of contract and wrongful dismissal against London General Transport Services Limited trading as Go Ahead.

Mr Travers had been employed as a bus driver for seven years and Mr Doyne for 19 years. However, they were summarily dismissed in March 2015 for allegedly bringing the company into disrepute.

They, along with two other

colleagues, gave evidence in January 2015 in support of a former colleague and bus driver who was standing trial for reckless and dangerous driving in the Bexley Magistrates' Court.

Their ex-colleague had been involved in an accident in September 2013 involving a New Route Master Bus that he had been driving, during which he said he had experienced brake failure whilst an expert's report suggested that human factors caused the accident.

They gave evidence about their personal experiences with

the Boris Bus including their experience of steering and braking faults. The ex-colleague was subsequently acquitted of the offences.

In dismissing the members, Go Ahead claimed that the evidence they gave in court regarding brakes and steering could not be substantiated and as such they had been guilty of gross misconduct.

RMT supported them with an application for interim relief and claims for unfair dismissal, breach of contract and wrongful dismissal.

It was argued that it was automatically unfair to dismiss them because their reports and evidence regarding faults they had experienced with the NRM were protected disclosures.

Following a five day hearing, the judge decided that the members had made protected disclosures regarding the health and safety of the travelling public and that the disclosures were in the public interest.

The disclosures included reports of steering faults, steering locking, electrical faults and compressor issues linked to

BRANCH SECRETARIES MEET



RMT conference secretary Jim Philp reports on a successful meeting of union branch secretaries

The RMT branch secretary's conference met in Gloucester this year and delegates discussed the Way Forward programme and held successful educational sessions.

RMT education officer Andy Gilchrist and David Coulthard of

Thomson Solicitors delivered two excellent sessions. Gloucester branch administered a good weekend unfortunately branch secretary Tim Wilkinson was unable to attend due to health problems and conference wished him a speedy recovery.

This year we were extremely honoured to have the general secretary and the assistant general secretary in attendance and both delivered inspiring speeches but left nobody thinking it was going to an easy ride going forward as D00 was

the braking system. The judge held that it was reasonable for the members to have made the disclosures in the criminal trial and that because this was the reason for their dismissal it was automatically unfair.

The judge also held that their dismissals were substantively unfair for, among other reasons, a failure to conduct a reasonable investigation and inconsistent treatment.

Both members have now been awarded compensation for their losses.

The union, the legal department and Thompsons Solicitors stood by these members throughout the process and offered continued support.

This is an important victory for RMT members and workers everywhere as it demonstrates that employers cannot simply get away with dismissing members for disclosing information that is in the public interest, ie whistleblowing, in the context of legal proceedings, and shows how the union will stand by its members in such circumstances. ■

going to have a big impact on our members across the country, but the union is still financially sound and still increasing its membership.

The general secretary and both assistants are committed to this conference and are in regular attendance to hear the issues that concern branch secretaries as they respect their role. Our Education programme is in its third year and has gone from strength to strength with delegates now asking for longer sessions on certain subjects aiding the Branch secretary in their duties. Conference will be in Inverness next year and plans are already on the go and I know that Inverness branch will do us proud. It would be good to see newer branch secretaries in attendance and maybe others that haven't attended before would receive some good Highland hospitality, we may even request that Nessie makes an appearance. ■

President's column



LAST CHANCE FOR A SOCIALIST LABOUR PARTY

At this year's AGM our members gave their overwhelming support to Jeremy Corbyn's new style of politics.

As the first Labour leader in 80 years to have been a local councillor, Jeremy understands that supporting people must start at the grassroots community level.

Many games are still being played by treacherous politicians and insincere trade union leaders.

Watching real leaders of our movement, like Ronnie Draper, General Secretary of the Bakers, Food & Allied Workers' Union and lifelong Labour party member, being denied a vote in the leadership election – along with thousands of RMT and other union members members – is really galling, equally galling is how others conduct themselves.

Some of the other general secretaries that were waxing lyrical regarding Jeremy not so long ago, seem to be less than enthusiastic or even moved to support Owen Smith claiming, the "leader needed to be credible". Owen Smith more credible than Jeremy?...leave you to make your own mind up there.

At the TUC conference and I'm sure I will hear many an insincere statement from some in the movement, playing to the audience, with no real desire to see a Socialist government that may derail their own gravy train.

There are so many challenges ahead:-RMT offshore members are being culled, or working longer for less in the most hazardous of conditions.

Seafarers are fighting unregulated competition, which has led to many being replaced with non UK seafarers on lower rates of pay.

Bus workers have long struggled to survive on low wages and now we see unscrupulous employers' lengthening routes and shortening rest breaks.

Ancillary workers are treated by employers as if they are of less worth and the minimum wages is all there want to pay.

Taxi and road freight members have to work long hours, with the challenge of unregulated minicabs and Uber encroaching on their "Plying for hire" rights.

Train Operating Companies have long been working hand in glove with governments, to ensure maximum profit is produced for the

shareholders and they want our members to pay the price with their jobs. You only need to look at the latest shenanigans going on at Southern, Govia Thameslink Rail.

The company received £1.2billion pounds of taxpayers money last year as a subsidy and when they fail to run the company properly, another £20 million is allocated of your money to try and sort things out. And this all happens one day before it's announced "revenues surge" to £3.4 billion and profits to £99.8 million, you couldn't make this up.

And there is Network Rail. The latest report from the government-friendly think-tank ASI states that NWR should be broken up and sold off for a predicted £8 billion...the lessons from Rail Track all but forgotten.

All this has gone on under previous governments, Labour, Tory/Lib and now the Tories again, I believe the best chance of saving all of our industries and services is with a Jeremy Corbyn-led Socialist Labour Party in power.

"In every trade union are to be found men occupying high official positions who prior to their appointment were militant and progressive minded men; but alas! What a change comes over these erstwhile militants when the mantle of responsibility is cast over their shoulders. What hitherto was bad becomes good; what was arbitrary becomes reasonable; what was near progressivism becomes extreme; what was wholesome criticism become unwarranted attacks. Be reasonable and have implicit trust in your officials is the lamentation of all the little minded Caesar's who are at the head of the Labour army" [JT Brownlie].

Finally, I would like to thank all the branches and members that took the time to send messages of solidarity to myself, Donna and the girls and to our senior assistant general secretary Steve Hedley and his family regarding the intrusion on both of our family holidays by the press

Gutter journalism from the Sun and Mail newspapers is nothing new and I know Bob Crow and his family lived with it for years...but we must not allow their lies to go unchallenged, so watch this space.

In Solidarity

Sean Hoyle



THE MINI 'MIDDY' RAILWAY

The award-winning 'Middy' heritage railway may be the smallest in the country but it has a lot to offer

Like the flight of the Bumble-Bee the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway, affectionately known as the 'Middy', defies all logic but, still, there it is.

This little stretch of line was a classic case of a railway built too late for the great railway age. It never paid its way and was effectively broke before it opened and was never fully completed with the rails petering out in the middle of a field.

Predominately used by farming communities, it still managed to struggle on against all the odds for 50 years. Heavily used in World War Two for the war effort, the Haughley – Laxfield branch as it was known closed in 1952 and that should have been the end of that, as they say.

Yet in 1991 after almost all traces of the line had disappeared a group of enthusiasts decided this country railway, once so important to the area, should not be forgotten.

Despite the whole line being taken up in 1953, all the rolling stock scrapped and the buildings scattered around the county in various states of dereliction, a hardy volunteer army set about doing the impossible and brought the 'Middy' back to life.

The 'Middy', a fine example of rural English history, is now resurrected as Suffolk's only standard gauge railway museum and ironically it is busier now than it ever was.

A section of the railway at Brockford has been recreated with original station buildings



which capture the atmosphere of this quirky line. As a result the MSLR was awarded the Heritage Railway Association's Interpretation Award by 2012 and Suffolk museum of the year in 2014.

But the 'Middy' is not only a museum, it runs regular steam trains and has a programme of carriage and wagon restoration complementing its efforts to recreate this slice of Edwardian England.

MSLR chairman John Stark is the very embodiment of this can-do and if-a-little-eccentric 'Middy' spirit with a great eye for detail too boot.

He explains that there is no place for any rolling stock pre-1950 to ensure authenticity.

Undaunted by the small scale of this operation he rolls off the bewildering amount of loco and carriage rolling stock on site from engines like a Bagnall, an LNER Y7 and a Hudswell-Clarke under restoration.

"Did you know with have the oldest operating horse box carriage in the country? Built in 1869," he says triumphantly with an infectious laugh.

He points out that the operation also includes its own pub the *Kitchener Arms* housed in – what else? – a restored Edwardian passenger carriage.

The pub is open every Friday and locals gather in this rural community there throughout the

summer months to support the Midi, drink the local ales all brewed within a five mile radius and even enjoy the occasional music session.

The Midi only has a licence to run trains for 30 days throughout the year so it also plays host to other cultural events to help things keep rolling along.

John explains that all staff are volunteers including a large percentage of active rail workers from Network Rail and from TOC's. There are a core of around 30 to 40 core activists from a pool of around 400 on the books to carry out all kinds of activities from P-Way work, restoring rail stock and maintaining the buildings to tending bar.

But that there are big plans including doubling the length of the track which will take the Midi up to a whopping half a mile.

Midi volunteers are justifiably proud of their little railway and don't believe that size is everything.

"I always ask visitors, can you imagine Miss Maple coming off our trains, and they say yes.

"Can you imagine Hercule Poirot alighting? invariably it's a no and that's the Midi," explains John with that laugh again.

For more information go to www.mslr.org.uk ■



MSLR chairman
John Stark



Kitchener Arms located on
an Edwardian train carriage



THE EU BENEFITS BIG BUSINESS

What does RMT's policy of backing Brexit mean for black and ethnic minority members and their families? asks **RMT member Glen Hart**.

We have seen the insurgency of far-right groups and political parties across Europe, using the refugee crisis and terrorist attacks to promote faux-nationalism on the basis of Islamophobia and anti-immigration rhetoric.

This has encouraged right-wing parties like UKIP and their counterparts in Europe, along with the right-wing media, to exploit the Brexit campaign, capitalising on divisive politics based on people's fear and hate.

As a consequence, it has not only split the Remain camp on the right of politics, it has also split those on the left who do not want any type of association with xenophobic or racist sentiment.

One argument, often repeated, aimed at the left-wing case for exiting the EU is that

voting to leave will strengthen the right-wing populist groups whose anti-immigration arguments have dominated the media over the last few years.

However, what this approach fails to take into consideration is the rise of xenophobia and racist, right-wing parties taking place while we're currently in the EU.

Fortress Europe has not in any way prevented non-EU migrants, including thousands of women and children being left to die in the Mediterranean. Others, detained in border camps, are often systematically abused, abandoned and sometimes tortured. It is demonstrably wrong to suggest that their plight and the life's of others will improve because we remain in the EU. Their plight is already dreadful.

Furthermore, the argument for or against the EU have nothing to do with immigration. Immigration is "dog whistle" politics used by the right to

help distract working people from actual issues more fundamentally affecting their daily lives – low wages, high rents, worsening public services, attacks on the NHS.

In the 1965 general election, considered Britain's most racist, a similar backdrop of anti-immigration narrative was provided that eventually cumulated with Enoch Powell infamous 'River of Blood' speech. Wafer-thin race relations legislation followed, as a foil to tougher immigration laws.

The EU is not a socially progressive institution as it is sometimes presented. It is an organisation designed to benefit big business and the mask is now slipping.

The EU establishes permanent austerity for its member states. This has already been confirmed by its treatment of Greece, Portugal and Italy. In Greece particularly, the vast majority of workers have had



their lives devastated by EU diktat!

In addition, a key feature of the politics of austerity is the disproportionate effect it has for historically oppressed communities – which is an additional layer of injustice and injury arising from EU and home-grown anti-labour policies.

Overall, RMT policy is right. Continued membership of the EU offers nothing for working people in the UK and even less for black and ethnic minority communities. ■



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CREWE CROWD

Crewe no1 branch presented Mark Prohett and Roger Charlesworth with long service awards. National executive committee members Steven Shaw and Eddie Dempsey did the honours and updated members on industrial matters. ■

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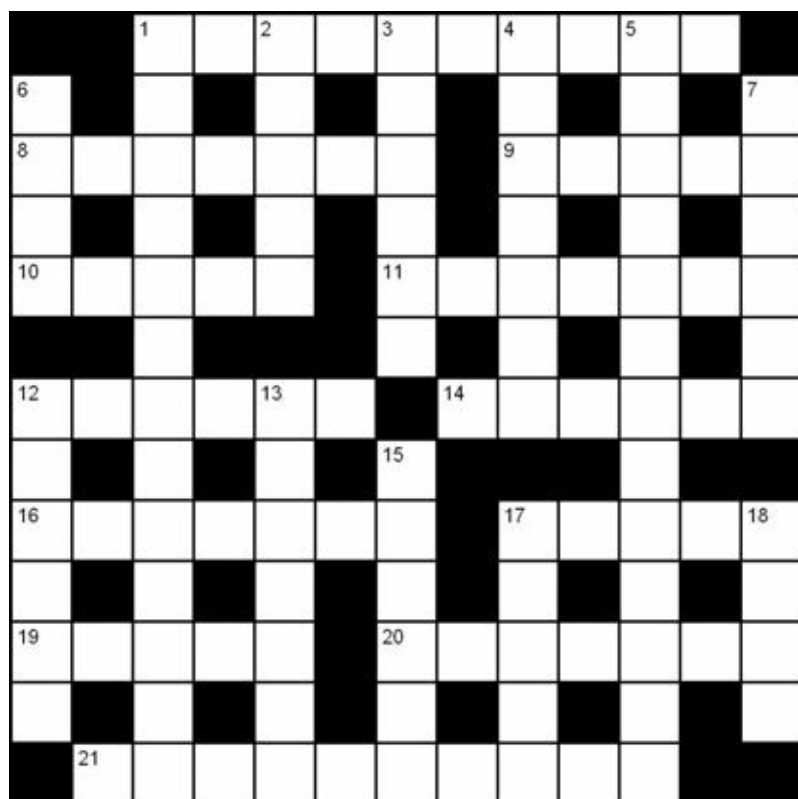
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Last month's solution...



The winner of last month's prize crossword Peter Shaw, Sheffield.

Send entries to Prize Crossword, RMT, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD by October 5 with your name and address.

Winner and solution in next issue.

ACROSS

- 1 Precariousness (10).
- 8 Area of ground (7)
- 9 Struggle for breath (5)
- 10 Joint (5).
- 11 Voter (7)
- 12 Elementary particle (6).
- 14 Cue (6)
- 16 Flammable liquid (7)
- 17 Tint (5)
- 19 Many-headed monster (5)
- 20 Jewellery (7)
- 21 Extremely pleasing (10)

DOWN

- 1 Awareness beforehand (13)
- 2 Representation (5)
- 3 Oblique (6)
- 4 Relating to the core (7)
- 5 Showing fair play (13)
- 6 Coffee (4)
- 7 Search (6)
- 12 Irregular (5)
- 13 Too old (7)
- 15 Sorrowful (6)
- 17 Pulsate (5)
- 18 Therefore (4)



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Employer		RMT Branch	
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Keep your RMT membership details up-to-date

In the light of draconian anti-trade union laws that have been used against the union, members should keep their personal data up to date. It is also important to note that in order to keep members informed your union requires your mobile telephone number and email address.

Members can do this via the RMT website, telephone the RMT helpline above, or writing to the membership department at RMT head office, Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD.

