

RMT *news*

Essential reading for today's transport worker

WORKING FOR YOU

RMT provides a range of industrial, legal and financial services for members

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Date of Birth*		National Insurance Number*	

Job Description*	Part Time	YES	NO

A. White English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British ☐ Irish ☐ Gypsy or Irish Traveller ☐ Any other White background ☐

Other mixed/multiple ethnic background	
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D. Black/African/Caribbean/Black British ☐ African ☐ Caribbean ☐ Other Black/African/Caribbean background

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9	7	1	7	4	5
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Reference Number

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EDITORIAL



WORKING FOR YOU

This issue of *RMT News* focuses on all the industrial, legal and financial services this union provides for you every day of the year.

Your RMT membership is the best insurance policy to protect your job as well as improving your wages and conditions at work.

RMT has also launched a new film and social media drive in support of the 'Keep the Guard' campaign and the workers involved in disputes across the country in defence of rail safety.

Four short films called *Unguarded* were cascaded on all social media platforms over the New Year period.

They are based on real experiences that have been fed back to us by both passengers and members who deal with the daily reality of the de-staffing of the railway.

The recurring themes are safety, security and accessibility on the railway and we will not allow those messages to get shoved aside by the private companies, the government and their cheerleaders at the Rail Delivery Group.

So make sure you spread the word on all social media platforms be it the union's web page, Twitter, Facebook or any other social media platform you use. This is your chance to take part in this important campaign.

It is a breath of fresh air to have a Labour leadership at last which is committed to bringing our railways back into public ownership and ending the racket of privatisation.

The over 70 per cent of the British public who support the public ownership of our railways have been ignored for too long

and it is a massive boost that Labour is now firmly lined up on their side.

A new RMT study has revealed that the latest New Year rail fare hikes, the highest in five years, is over 50 per cent more than the increase in earnings over the last year alone.

The average commuter now pays over 10 per cent of their net income on fares, with some commuters paying as much as 20 per cent, and the reality is that many are being priced off the railways.

That is the direct result of privatisation and the mad-cap rail franchise model which is clearly not fit for purpose.

The Tory position on public ownership has always been about political ideology. Why else would they allow three quarters of our railways to fall into overseas ownership where fares paid in London, Manchester and Liverpool are siphoned off to subsidise passengers in Berlin, Paris and Amsterdam?

RMT welcomes some findings from the Scottish government's Ferry Law Review which supports the direct award of all public ferry contracts across Scotland.

However it is inconsistent to pursue a direct award on the Clyde and Hebrides but not on the Northern Isles routes. RMT looks forward to making the case for public ownership and operation on the Northern Isles, along with the Minister this coming year.

As we welcome in 2018 you can be sure that RMT will be fighting in your corner whatever grade of transport or energy worker you are.

Mick Cash

When you have finished with this magazine give it to a workmate who is not in your union. Even better, ask them to join RMT by filling in the application form opposite



SOLID ARRIVA CROSS COUNTRY STRIKE ACTION

RMT train manager and senior conductor members on Arriva Cross Country took 48-hour strike action last month in a dispute over abuse of rostering and Sunday working after management again wrecked talks aimed at reaching a solution.

The action impacted on

services from Penzance to Aberdeen and points in between on Britain's most wide-ranging rail operation.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that it was disgraceful that Arriva management had effectively sabotaged talks that were making progress towards a

settlement to this dispute.

"It is the company's ineptitude and arrogance that has forced us to take a further round of action.

"Our members are standing up for the principles of a decent work life balance and against the abuse of rostering and Sunday working by a

management that is out of control.

"The action is rock solid across the franchise from Penzance to Aberdeen and the disruption to services is solely down to Arriva management's intransigence," he said.

MERSEYRAIL SAFETY STRIKE

RMT members on Merseyrail took further 24 hour strike action last month in the dispute over guards and rail safety.

The union once more pointed out that the dispute could be easily resolved if senior Merseyside Labour politicians followed national Labour Party policy and supported their safety-critical rail staff, instead of acting as human shields for profiteering private rail companies.

RMT has attacked political stunts from the Mayors in the regional media designed to deflect from the massive criticism they are getting from both inside and outside the Labour Party.

Those political actions by the Mayors have let the rail

company off the hook and have been a major factor in the reason that there has been no invitation to attend any meaningful talks with ACAS, the company or anyone else because normal industrial relations have been effectively suspended.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that members were angry that senior Labour figures had chosen to ignore party policy on Driver-Only Operation to side with the private company rather than our safety-critical guards.

"If those politicians had taken a positive and pro-active stance, like their colleagues in Wales and Scotland, we could move towards a solution to this dispute which puts safety first.

"The fact that we have been



unable to make any progress whatsoever with the company means we have no option but to put this action on and the blame lies with Merseyrail and their political supporters.

"The City and Regional Labour leaders need to step back immediately from the terms of the resolution to remove all the guards that they voted for a year ago this week,

which lit the fuse in this dispute.

"Those senior Labour politicians have chosen the wrong side and they need to stand with the many – the passengers, the workers and the people of Merseyside, and not the few – Tory ministers and bosses of the private operator Merseyrail," he said.



VIRGIN WEST COAST IMPROVE OFFER

Following 24-hour strike action on Virgin West Coast and the threat of more action, the company has agreed to an improved pay offer which is being put out to a referendum by the union with a recommendation to accept.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash congratulated members involved for the unity, determination and resolve they expressed to fight for a better deal including 24-hour strike action last month.

"The enhanced pay offer simply would not have been

possible without members taking strike action and being prepared to take further industrial action in order to achieve pay justice.

"It goes to show what can be achieved when members stand united," he said.

The revised pay offer includes an increase of 3.2 per cent for the respective grades covered within the agreement, backdated to April 1 2017.

There is also an increase to the allocation of Friends and Family tickets from four to six per annum with the additional



2017 entitlement to be carried over to 2018 if necessary.

It was also agreed that the base working week for the FTE staff will remain unchanged at 35 hours.

There will also be a one-off non-pensionable payment of £500 and a return to the matter of a reduction in the working week in December 2020.



RMT's four new short films in support of the 'Keep the Guard' campaign and disputes across the country in defence of rail safety have drawn over a quarter of a million hits on social media platforms so far.

The short films - "Unguarded" - weave together stories from individual passengers based on feedback over the past year and was released on social media platforms over the New Year.

RMT general secretary Mick

Cash said that RMT was committed to using every tool at its disposal to defend the role of the guard and resist profit-driven moves to throw safety-critical staff off our trains.

"These films are based on real experiences that have been fed back to us by both passengers and our members who deal with the daily reality of the de-staffing of the railway.

"The themes that are a constant throughout are safety,

security and accessibility and we will not allow those messages to get shoved aside in the barrage of rhetoric from the private companies, the government and their cheerleaders at the Rail Delivery Group.

"RMT is confident that this latest initiative will spark off a new surge in support for the on-going campaign and for members who find themselves at the sharp end.

"If you are on Twitter or

Facebook you can re-tweet and share the films.

"If you are not on social media you can click on RMT's YouTube channel and copy the link and share it with your contact list through email or text," he said.

To view the film please visit the RMT Facebook page, Twitter account or

www.rmt.org.uk/unguarded/



STRIKING FOR GUARDS

Greater Anglia bosses Abellio admit that it kept the Guard on its Scotrail trains because of Scottish government pressure

RMT members on Great Anglia and South Western Railway took 24-hour strike action late last month against the extension of driver-only operation on the franchises.

As well as removing Guards, South Western Railway also plans to de-staff two thirds of its 210 stations at a time of heightened security and crime alert.

RMT is warning that removing the guard from trains which will then also travel through 141 unstaffed stations will result in a toxic mix of dangers where passengers and the train driver are more exposed to crime and anti-social behavior, while disabled and older passengers will not be able to get on and off the train when they wish to.

Greater Anglia has also admitted in its official 'Disabled Peoples Protection policy'

document that older and disabled passengers are worse off on driver-only trains than they when a conductor is on board.

It warns that: "The majority of our trains on the commuter services are operated without any customer service staff on board and are known as driver-only operated services. This means that you will generally not find staff available to help you once you are on board the train".

Greater Anglia bosses Abellio has also admitted that it did a deal to keep the Guard on trains on their Scottish franchise because "the Scottish government, as franchise commissioning authority, asked Abellio to apply a different approach for Scotrail".

RMT has predicted that over a million more trains a year will run without guards on the five

companies RMT is currently in dispute with, Greater Anglia Railway, Merseyrail, Northern Rail, Southern Rail and South Western Railway.

Figures passed to RMT show that on Southern Railway alone, where driver only operation is being rolled out, over 15,000 trains a year are already running fully or partly without a second person and if the same ratio was applied to South Western Railway that would be the equivalent of 32,000 trains a year across that single franchise alone.

Under the Northern Rail Franchise agreement up to 50 per cent of services must be able to run without a guard, the equivalent of 457,000 trains a year, and it is planned that all of Merseyrail's 218,000 trains will run without a guard.

The union has calculated that if the 50 per cent of services

without a guard is eventually also applied to South Western and Southern well over a million more trains in total a year will be run without a guard. That figure will also rise even higher if the extension of driver-only trains on Greater Anglia takes place.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash warned that once the private rail companies are allowed to force the driver to leave without a second person then the all the evidence points to this method of operation becoming the norm and not the exception.

"The government and the train companies should be hanging their heads in shame that their real plans have now been rumbled and they must be forced to halt and reverse the dash to DOO on our railways," he said.



SIGNALLING VICTORY

Union wins legal appeal allowing signallers meal breaks on turns longer than six hours

RMT Three Bridges branch secretary Dave Crawford was instrumental in winning an appeal to the Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT) which had previously ruled that taking a continuous 20 minute break was unsafe.

Network Rail had argued that it was safer for a signaller to take short breaks rather than the continuous 20 minutes uninterrupted as defined by the Working Time Directive and that it was too expensive to adopt.

However RMT solicitor Naomi Linn put it to the appeal Judge that the WTD could not be linked to health and safety as it was adopted by the British legislator to ensure that all workers got adequate rest breaks.

She cited a previous EAT ruling that concluded that everybody had the right of a continuous 20 minute rest break for any shift over six hours.

She also argued that although Network Rail was attempting to argue that there was period of times when signallers were inactive they still could be interrupted by phone calls from various parties and were therefore effectively on call.

After hearing all the arguments, the Judge ruled that David Crawford was entitled to a continuous 20 minute uninterrupted rest break away from his workstation and that the original Employment Tribunal had made an error in law and allowed the appeal.

Supporting David Crawford's case, RMT signaller Peter Lee and his Sussex Coast branch secretary Chris Rodway were in attendance to witness this victory in a long-running battle for workplace justice.

Chris Rodway paid tribute to Three Bridges branch for fighting a long battle against



Victory: left to right Sussex Coast branch secretary Chris Rodway, RMT signaller Peter Lee and Three Bridges branch secretary Dave Crawford celebrate outside the court

this injustice.

"My branch was horrified when it learned that signallers' turns could sometime be as long as twelve hours without a meal break.

"That is unsafe and morally indefensible, this is the 21st

century and there should be no place for Victorian practices," he said.

The ruling could have far reaching implications for all signallers and the union is waiting to hear if Network Rail will use the right to appeal. ■

ORKNEY FERRIES TO TAKE ACTION IN FIGHT FOR PAY JUSTICE

RMT members working on Orkney Ferries launched industrial action earlier this month in a fight for pay justice.

Members began a work to rule after voting by around 80 per cent for strike action with an even higher number backing action short of a strike.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the attitude of the company had forced us to put on this action following an overwhelming vote by members and the employers needed to take notice.

"The staff on these routes will not sit back while their

standard of living is undermined by the company and their anger and frustration was fully reflected in the ballot result," he said.

RMT national secretary Steve Todd also said that Orkney Ferries now needed to show that they are listening.

"The union has confirmed a programme of industrial action and we expect the company to start taking this dispute seriously.

The ball is firmly in the companies court and RMT remains available for serious talks," he said. ■





CUT FARES, NOT GUARDS

Highest New Year rail fare hikes in five years worsen the cost of living crisis

A new RMT study has revealed that rail fare rises in season tickets of 3.6 per cent and fares on average of 3.4 per cent is over 50 per cent more than the increase in earnings over the last year alone.

RMT held protests around the country when passengers returned to work on January 2 and revealed that fares have increased five times the rate of public sector pay awards and at twice the speed of average earnings since 2010.

The average commuter also

pays over 10 per cent of their net income on fares, with some commuters paying as much as 20 per cent.

As a result many people are being priced off the railways and if you are on the National Living Wage you could spend on average 20 per cent of your wages on fares.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that another eye-watering New Year fare hike will make it even harder for workers to get by.

"The private operators and

government say the rises are to fund investment but the reality is that they are pocketing the profits while passengers are paying more for less with rail engineering work being delayed or cancelled, skilled railway jobs being lost and staff cut on trains, stations and at ticket offices.

"It's a national scandal that private profit comes before public safety on our rail network.

"Even worse, with 75 per cent of Britain's railways in

other countries hands, it is the British people, paying the highest fares in Europe, who are subsidising state-run rail operations in Berlin, Paris and Amsterdam while the Tory government refuses to even consider the public ownership option in their own back yard.

"The answer to this racket is to return Britain's railways to public ownership and end to this gross profiteering at the fare-payers' expense," he said.



Chester



Paddington



Wigan

BOMBARDIER CONTRACT VICTORY

RMT welcomed news that Bombardier in Derby has secured two new major contracts as a “victory for the workforce who have fought and battled through years of uncertainty to secure a future for train building in Britain, the nation that gave the railways to the world”.

The union said that it’s robust “Battle for Bombardier” campaign, which kicked off in 2011 around the fiasco of the Thameslink contract award under the last Tory-led government, had been totally vindicated and justified.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that announcements for the new West Midlands Trains franchise worth £542 million and for C2C franchise worth £105 million was extremely positive news for members employed by Bombardier in Derby, the hub of train manufacturing in Britain since 1840.

“The new contracts will provide job security to directly employed staff along with a lifeline to the many hundreds of businesses and thousands of jobs within the supply chain.

“Quality product, hardworking staff and meaningful industrial relations have all assisted and we now need to get away from the peaks and troughs business cycle and plan for a secure future for train building in Britain.

“Whilst it is good news for Bombardier staff we now need to receive confirmation and categorical assurances on behalf of our WMT and C2C fleet engineers, technicians and other grades of support staff that their jobs are not put at risk or that they will be TUPE transferred to Bombardier in order to carry out the fleet maintenance programmes,” he said.

Parliamentary column



Andy McDonald, Labour MP

A RICH MAN'S TOY

The Tory chancellor Philip Hammond has been true to his word and his government has followed through on his promise. In 2011 he said the railway was a “rich man’s toy”. The rail industry is doing its level best to deliver on that pledge with the announcement that rail fares will go up by an average of 3.4 per cent in January, the highest increase in five years. Ticket prices have already risen by 27 per cent since 2010, twice the rate of wages.

Contrast this with fuel duty, which has been frozen for seven years at a cost of £46 billion. Or air passenger duty in aviation – untouched for five years. Yet this government has disproportionately penalised rail passengers year after year while linking fare increases to the more punitive retail price index (RPI) rather than the lower consumer price index (CPI). Why?

The simple truth is that the government won’t admit – indeed it cannot admit – that the rail system it created and so steadfastly defended for so many years is now broken beyond repair. Rail privatisation has wasted enormous sums of money. Yet the on-going defence of failure can become dangerously misleading and potentially dishonest. Rail fares are the apotheosis of this mistrust.

To compound matters, the transport secretary Chris Grayling came to parliament last month- to announce a strategic vision for rail. This new vision was actually a huge bailout for Stagecoach on the East Coast mainline which could cost taxpayers billions of pounds.

The share price of Stagecoach and other train operators such

as Go Ahead and First Group rose significantly last week following the news that the government will guarantee its profits. You would have thought the rail companies might have shown a bit of good grace and decency over the fares increase given the taxpayer bailout? Not a bit of it.

Public faith in the railway seems to matter little to the Rail Delivery Group (RDG), the combination of Network Rail and the passenger and freight operation companies that run the network. For example, the group boasts that £925 million of private investment was made in rail last year. In fact, much of this is finance for new trains. Finance is not investment. This is but one subjective claim among many. It’s hard to escape the conclusion that the RDG is not only misleading passengers but exploiting them over the fare increases.

Labour’s policy of public ownership of rail will unite track and trains at the highest level of the railway under a united, public company.

These plans will, for the first time in 20 years, give the railway a guiding mind which can take a strategic and operational view of the whole network. This contrasts with the current structure where decision-making is totally uncoordinated.

Today’s fare rise announcement is yet another betrayal of rail passengers by the government and train companies. Only Labour has the ambition and courage to deliver the railway the public deserves. ■

• *Extracts from The Guardian article by Andy McDonald MP, shadow secretary of state for transport.*

RIP OFF: A Virgin East Coast train at London's King's Cross station. The early termination of the East Coast rail franchise will cost taxpayers hundreds of millions of pounds.

A Virgin East Coast train, red and yellow, is stopped at a platform. The train has the Virgin logo on its side. The platform has a large glass and steel structure in the background.

RAIL FRANCHISE CHAOS

RMT demands inquiry into sustainability of rail franchising

RMT has called for an immediate forensic inquiry into the sustainability of the government's rail franchising programme after it announced the early termination of the East Coast franchise.

The East Coast rail franchise, run by an alliance of Stagecoach and Virgin, will be terminated three years early, forfeiting hundreds of millions in premiums due to be paid to the Treasury.

Under a rail strategy announced by the transport secretary Chris Grayling, a new partnership model will replace the franchise contract of Virgin Trains East Coast.

Stagecoach and Virgin had pledged to pay £3.3 billion to run the service until 2023 when

it was re-privatised in 2015 after six years in public hands.

Instead, VTEC will only pay a fraction of that sum, with the bulk of payments due in the final three years of the franchise.

Stagecoach has admitted it overpaid for the franchise and has been seeking a bailout from the government for some time and shares in Stagecoach jumped 12 per cent on the news.

Stagecoach also announced an eight per cent increase in profits while RMT was balloting members for industrial action as the company attempts to hammer staff with an imposed pay increase and associated attacks on working conditions.

The scandal was compounded

by evidence of a rodent infestation after pictures emerged clearly showing droppings in the food preparation and kitchen area on a VTEC unit.

The Virgin East Coast franchise has also received an astonishing £48.49 per train mile just from passengers' fares in 2015/16 amounting to a total of £708 million revenue in a year whilst Virgin's West Coast franchise was slightly behind with £46.33 per train mile but earning overall more passenger revenue with £1.017 billion a year.

These huge sums levered out of Britain's beleaguered fare payers even outstripped those received by the lucrative London and South East

commuter franchises including GTR Southern although passenger revenue here was still a very healthy £34.81 per train mile for a franchise that has been widely criticised for poor performance.

The full list in Chart 1 (opposite) has been compiled by Cambridge Economic Policy Associates (CEPA) in association with SYSTRA but buried away on the rail regulators website.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the whole shoddy deal stank and the franchise was in crisis once more.

"It looks like the government rigging the market again in favour of the private sector. This is basically Chris Grayling manning the lifeboats and bailing out Virgin and

Stagecoach once again,” he said.

Labour shadow transport secretary Andy MacDonald told the Commons that the strategy announcement was “a total smokescreen”.

“The real issue is that the East Coast franchise has failed again and the taxpayer will bail it out.

“Markets don’t lie and the secretary of state has let Stagecoach off the hook for hundreds of millions of pounds. He’s tough on everyone except the private sector,” he said.

Former Transport Minister Lord Adonis nationalised East Coast in 2009 when the previous private operator National Express also said that it could not meet its promised payments to the Treasury.

Following the latest East Coast shambles, Mr Adonis also warned that First group was losing “big money” on the Transpennine Express franchise and was consulting its lawyers.

The Transpennine Express franchise requires it to increase its premium payments from £6.8 million in 2017/18 to a massive £178.9 million by 2024/25.

RMT also believes that other franchises will be at risk due to over optimistic projection of passenger growth. For example, as well as the Transpennine franchise the Northern franchise assumes a 25 per cent increase in passenger demand over the duration of the franchise.

On this basis there will be a staggering 85 per cent cut in public funding from £275 million to £39 million by 2025/26.

Chart 2 shows that both the Transpennine Express and the Northern franchise are on course for huge cuts in public funding which, combined with slower than expected passenger growth, suggest the rail funding crisis in the north can only get worse.

Mick Cash said that far from a Northern Powerhouse there was now a real danger of a full blown Northern rail crisis.

“First we have the East Coast franchise being terminated early

and now it emerges that the Transpennine Express could follow suit and the sustainability of the Northern franchise is built on sand,” he said.

First Group has also been handed another contract to run Great Western Railway (GWR) up to 2024 after it was controversially allowed to continue running the service after dodging £800 million due to the government in an original contract.

The Department of Transport will extend First’s current GWR

franchise contract by another year, to April 2020, and then give a direct award for two more years, with an option to double the tenure.

The biggest commuter franchise, Govia, which operates the Thameslink, Great Northern and troubled Southern services, will be broken up.

“The government is engaged in fantasy franchising where over ambitious projections of passenger growth, combined with the reality of falling passenger numbers, is a toxic

combination that is likely to torpedo the government’s whole franchising programme leaving passenger services vulnerable to cuts and the taxpayer left to pick up the bill.

“Instead of swallowing its ideological pride and taking services into the public sector the government is lurching from crisis to crisis.

“RMT is calling for a full inquiry into the sustainability of rail franchising which is clearly not fit for purpose,” he said.

Figure 4.1: Passenger revenue per train mile – TOC level

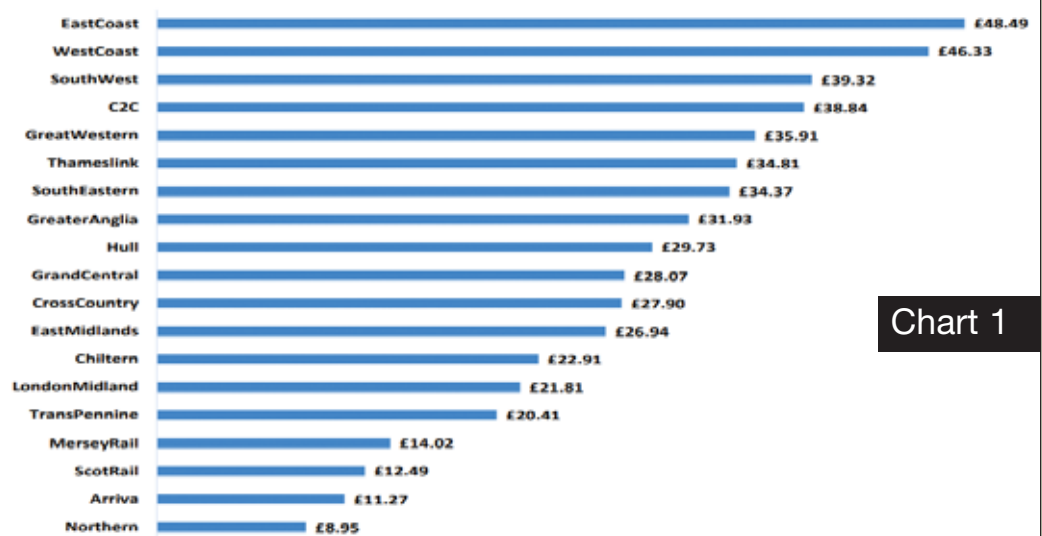


Chart 1

Source: CEPA analysis using published ORR data.

Subsidy payments for Northern and TPE franchises

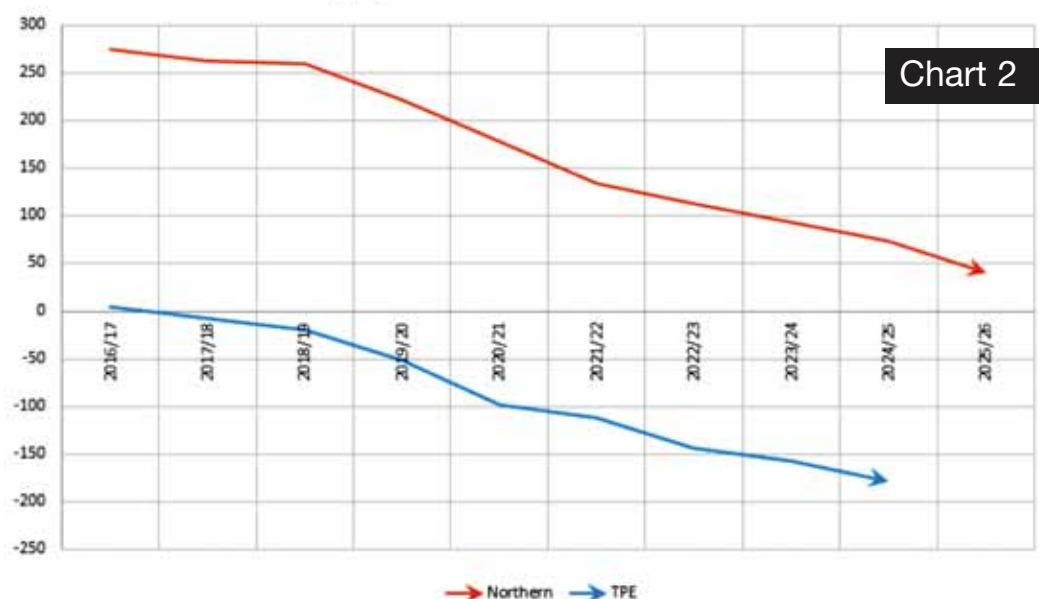
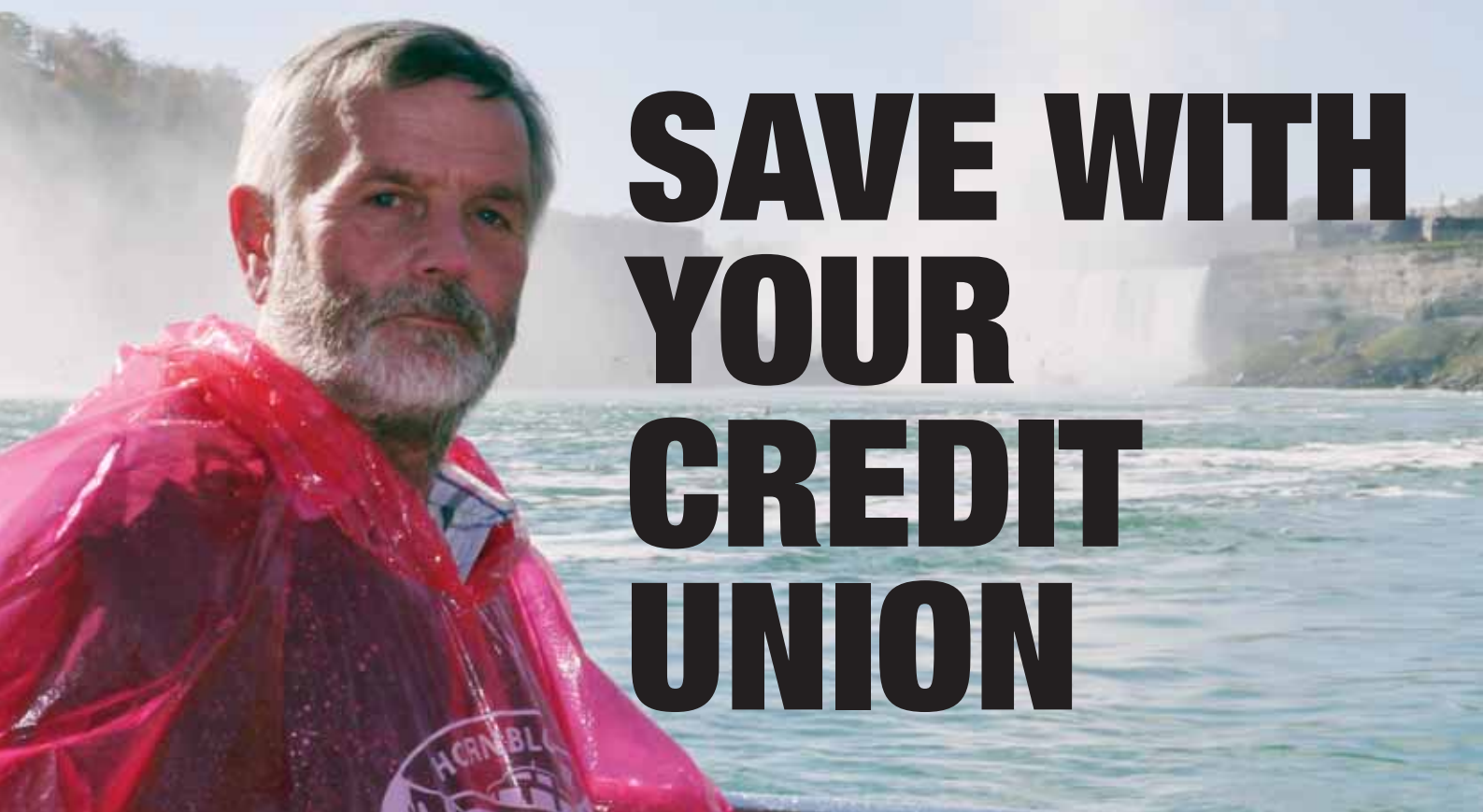


Chart 2

RMT analysis of the projected subsidy profile for Northern and TPE franchises:

Transpennine Express subsidy: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/505096/f0013278-reply-premium-payments-ntpe.pdf

Northern subsidy: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2016-01-05/21124/>



SAVE WITH YOUR CREDIT UNION

Credit Union can help you save money for when you really need it

The RMT Credit Union is an ethical savings and loan service. It is run by the members for the members. All profits go back into the Credit Union and funds are used to pay an annual dividend and more services for you the members.

As well your main Credit Union account you can join the Christmas Club which pays out in mid-November with a

dividend to ease the financial pressure at Yuletide (see page 31).

There is also a Summer Savings Club which pays out with a dividend in mid-July to pay for a well-earned holiday.

RMT Credit Union member Ivor Riddell was glad that he saved for a special holiday.

"I saved with the RMT Credit Union Summer account and

paid for my holiday of a lifetime, to Niagra Falls in Canada. I barely noticed the money coming out and then I had enough to fly for my dream," he said.

Mia Baker, aged 5, was also pleased her Mum saved with the Christmas Club.

"I dreamed all year about what I wanted for my, special Christmas present and Santa

never let me down. Mummy said that it was because Santa very wisely saves with the RMT Credit Union. I didn't really understand what she meant. But I love my present!" she said. ■

For more information:
www.rmt.org.uk /credit-union
Email: c.union@rmt.org.uk
Tel: 020 7529 8835
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RMT ORGANISING CONFERENCES 2018

February

RMT Industrial Organising Conference of Signalling and Operations Grades	23 – 24	Elgin
RMT National Health and Safety Conference	28	Doncaster

March

RMT Women's Conference	2 – 3	Manchester
RMT Industrial Organising Conference of Supervisory & Associated Grades	10–11	Twickenham
RMT Black & Ethnic Minority Members Conference	21– 22	Cardiff
RMT Freight and Logistics Industrial Organising Conference	23 – 24	Southampton

April

RMT Industrial Organising Conference of Train Crew and Shunting Grades	12 – 13	Aberystwyth
RMT Bus Workers Industrial Organising Conference	13 – 14	Ryde, IOW
RMT Industrial Organising Conference of Engineering Grades	19 – 20	Wigan
RMT Industrial Organising Conference of Station Staff & Associated Grades	20– 21	Reading

May

RMT BGM Maritime Industrial Organising Conference	9– 11	Douglas, IOM
RMT Industrial Organising Conference of Transport Cleaning Workers	12	Cardiff
RMT BGM Offshore Industrial Organising Conference	16 – 17	Aberdeen
RMT LGBT Members' Conference	18 – 19	Ipswich

June

RMT National Conference of Branch and Regional Council Secretaries	3	Cardiff
RMT Annual General Meeting	24 – 29	Edinburgh

Ask your branch secretary for more details.

INTAKE: This year's apprenticeship intake are George Holmes, Tyler Wallage, Marnie Ross, Ben Burchell, Stacy Gregory & Sam Jones will be training to become Deck ratings and Christian Wadley, Connan Miles, Tom Packman will be training to become Technical ratings

P&O APPRENTICES SUCCESS!

Five seafaring apprentices graduate and seven more are taken on by P&O

RMT Dover Shipping branch Secretary Lee Davison and assistant branch secretary Dale Kember attended the graduation of the latest P&O Deck and Tech apprentices at its head office in Dover.

This year five apprentices completed the course and now move forward to the position of Seaman and Motorman Grade to with the company on their Short sea vessels.

The seaman will go on to work in the Deck department on board their respective vessels and the Motormen with work in the technical department which run the engine rooms on board.

Also at the presentation were the new intake of apprentices starting their training this year with P&O Ferries. There are seven Deck Apprentices and

three Tech.

Lee Davison said that he was pleased that this included two female apprentices who will be training to become deck ratings.

"It's great to see P&O Ferries

pushing forward with the apprenticeship scheme on the Short Sea and increasing the numbers on a yearly basis.

"These apprentices are the future Bosuns and Engine room

Petty officers and It's fantastic to see two females apprentices in this year's intake and we hope all the apprentices enjoy the course and futures with the company," he said.■

GRADUATION: The five apprentices who completed their training from left to right Jay Prescott, Ryan Christopher Tech , George Lansdown, Jasper Weyland Tech and Lewis Pearce Tech.



HELP PROTECT THEM WHEN YOU NO LONGER CAN

RMT
protect✓

The things we do for love! Cheering from the sidelines when they're 6-0 down; overlooking the messy bedroom while they're cramming for exams; Justin Bieber concerts; shaking hands with their first boyfriend through gritted teeth; the 'taxi' to swimming lessons twice a week; the packed lunches; and the after-school 'artwork' we pin on our fridge doors...

You look out for your loved ones everyday. Maybe we can help keep up the good work when you're gone.

RMT Life Cover steps in to shoulder some of your family's financial obligations when you no longer can.

How? By giving them a cash lump sum - up to £50,000 - to make up some of the shortfall when they no longer have your salary. It can help cover both the regular household outgoings as well as any other costs that are harder to foresee and, of course, funeral arrangements too.

The average cost of a funeral has more than doubled since 2000 and if the trend continues, it's predicted that costs could reach £6,107 by 2023*. By taking out just £20,000 of life cover, you'll help your nearest and dearest cover immediate expenses and more. With so much else to deal with at this difficult time, helping with the short-term finances for your partner or children can be just the first step towards getting their lives back on track.

It's not the only way life insurance can help them - our cover can also be a longer-term solution for any family who would struggle to pay bills, meet mortgage repayments, bring up the kids and keep meals on the table without your regular income.

It's about helping to keep things ticking over. It's about helping to take care of them, even when you're not around. It's about telling them you still love them.



Don't just take our word for it though. Amanda, 46, from Derbyshire explains why she purchased life insurance, "I have two boys and just worry about leaving them without anything and paying for my own funeral."

Deborah, 47, from Staffordshire agrees that family are extremely important, especially her husband, Paul. "I felt that I had a responsibility to put something in place for him should that day come".

Life insurance is for people like Amanda and Deborah. It's for people who want to enjoy peace of mind knowing their nearest and dearest are going to be ok financially when they're gone. It's for people who want to help their family and home hold together when everything else can feel like it's falling apart. It's for people who have been looking after their loved ones for years, and now want a way to help secure their future too.

Remember...

- ✓ No health checks - guaranteed acceptance for UK residents aged 18-64
- ✓ Up to £50,000 cash lump sum
- ✓ No price increases
- ✓ Your premiums stay the same throughout your cover

Year 1 Cashback – get 10% of your first year's paid premiums back, as a thank you for choosing RMTProtect.



Simply visit:

www.rmtprotect.com/life

or call **0800 033 4184** for a free quote.

Year 1 Cashback Terms and Conditions: 1. The cashback amount payable is 10% of the first 12 months' paid premiums. 2. The cashback will be due once the 12th paid premium has been successfully collected and the policy is fully paid up to date. 3. The cashback will be credited to the nominated bank account, from which the monthly premiums are collected. The cashback is paid by RMTProtect.

*Mintel: Funerals – UK January 2007 / Matter Research August 2014 / Forecast based on average annual compound growth rate of 6.33% each year between 2007 and 2015.

† The gift card will be sent within 14 days after we receive your second premium. One £30 M&S gift card per customer. Offer ends 31st December 2017.

RMT is an Introducer Appointed Representative of RMTProtect, a trading name of Union Income Benefit Holdings Ltd (UIB) who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, registered number 307575. This can be checked on the FCA website at www.fca.org.uk/register. RMT Life Cover is arranged by RMTProtect and underwritten by Scottish Friendly Assurance Society Limited, registered number 110002. RMTProtect, 39-51 Highgate Road, London, NW5 1RT. Tel: 0800 033 4181. www.rmtprotect.com Registered in England No.03877610. Registered Office: 4th Floor, 7/10 Chandos Street, London W1G 9DQ.



SAVE THE FUND!

Retired RMT organiser Jim Stevenson calls for assistance to save the London Widows and Orphan Fund

The union's London and Widows and Orphan Fund (LWOF) has been running for over 50 years but it is under threat of closure and needs your help. It was very hard to write that last sentence after being involved in the fund for most of that time.

In the past few years the committee has lost five of our active members due to bereavement and I myself have mobility and health problems.

The fund was originally set up in the 1950s by the Goods and Cartage side of the NUR Kings Cross No2 branch and the Nine Elms depot with support from the union. It provided little extras to the bereaved families of colleagues who died in service.

The NUR supplied names on the national register of those in receipt of the union's Orphan Fund benefit that lived within a 50 mile radius of London. The LWOF initially provided a seaside trip in the summer and a Christmas party every year.

Initially these trips were

arranged to travel by bus but in 1965 it was proposed that the outings would be by rail.

British Rail was supportive but additional funding was required and a Summer and Christmas raffle was set up. I have never known anyone else but union stalwart Rocky Pearce to organise this activity.

In order to feed up to 300 widows and orphans train catering members from East and West Coast lines and Great Western volunteered their time to provide breakfast and dinner on the return journey.

An annual buffet was introduced to raise funds and cups and shields were given in recognition of the efforts of individuals who had given their services to the fund. This was supported by operating companies and the Kings Cross branch of ASLEF and our own catering members provided the buffet and bar.

Catering members also gave their services to give annual dinners for retired members of several branches.

One highlight was an educational trip in 1978 when the divisional manager of Eastern region invited us to travel on the HST 125 to York with the mayor of Camden and a piper in full Highland dress.

On arrival at York we were met by the mayor and the York Rail Brass Band who played us into the station bringing the place to a standstill.

In 1993 the committee purchased a caravan on the Isle of Sheppey in Kent to give families a short holiday. It also arranged pantomimes and educational trips in the Spring and an outing during the school Summer holidays.

Even after rail privatisation many train operating companies continued to support sponsored travel tickets with picnic bags provided by Rail Gourmet Kings Cross.

Other highlights were visits to Disney Paris made possible by Mick Lynch and his Eurostar branch members contributing their concessionary travel vouchers. Former RMT member

John Helmsley also gave concessions at his hotel on Great Yarmouth.

It would be impossible to detail all the activities carried out during my 50 plus years of involvement but it is important that this work continues. In the past couple of years the committee has lost five of our active members due to bereavement. I myself have mobility and health problems together with my loss of contacts in the industry since my retirement so I cannot give the fund the commitment it deserves.

It is up to new blood to continue the work of all those who supported the fund in the past.

If you can become involved you can contact myself on 07778772113, Wally Levy on 079463075089, Steve Loeber on 07941 053318 or Stuart Cameron in the RMT South East Regional Office without whom I could not have made it this far.





WORKING FOR YOU

20 ways your RMT membership helps you at work and saves you money

RMT has developed a number of benefits to save members money. This includes negotiating access to savings and special offers from our approved partners.

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

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 is also payable; proof of this must be sent with application for retirement benefit.

TAX AND WILL PREPARATION

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

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.

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.

RMT CREDIT UNION

Accessible savings and affordable loans from RMT's Credit union. www.rmt.org.uk/about/credit-union



NEW – RMT CAR INSURANCE COMPARISON WEBSITE

With the average cost of car insurance having already soared by £110 in the last year (BBC, 2017), it is more important than ever to shop around for a good deal – check out the NEW RMT Car Insurance Comparison website to see how much you could save. www.RMTcar.co.uk

ONLINE SHOPPING DISCOUNTS

Shop online with RMTrewards.com and earn cashback savings from hundreds of retailers, like B&Q, Argos and Tesco. It's free to join, plus you'll get a FREE £10 Welcome Bonus in your online account! (Terms and conditions apply)

www.rmtrewards.com

FINES POOL

if you drive a company vehicle as part of your job you can join the RMT fines pool for £7 per year. The Fines Pool will reimburse members for any speeding fines, related court costs and lost time to attend a court hearing.

www.rmt.org.uk/member-benefits/fines-pool

BEREAVEMENT BENEFIT

A Death Grant of £600 is payable to the nearest relative or legal representative if a member dies through any cause prior to retirement.



CASHBACK PREPAID CARD

Fancy cashback on your everyday shopping? Use your RMT Prepaid Plus Cashback card at over 50 partner retailers, including Sainsbury's, ASDA and Boots, and earn unlimited cashback! It's different to a credit or debit card - you can only spend what you load so there's less chance of getting carried away. www.rmtprepaid.com

FREE £5,000 ACCIDENTAL DEATH COVER

As a benefit of your RMT membership you can register for £5,000 Free Accidental Death Cover. Cover is for UK residents aged 18-69. 12 months free cover.



Annually renewable and always FREE. The Cover is underwritten by Advent Insurance PCC Ltd – UIB Cell.

www.rmtprotect.com

HOME INSURANCE

Get a £50 Love2Shop Reward when you buy a UIA Home & Contents insurance online. www.uia.co.uk/rmt

RMT DRIVE

Risk Free Car Purchasing for RMT Members www.rmtCAR.oco.uk

HEALTH CASH PLAN

For a small monthly premium you can claim cashback on dental, optical and therapy treatments. Visit www.bhsf.co.uk

LOW RATE CONTRIBUTIONS

ARE YOU PAYING THE CORRECT CONTRIBUTION RATE?

Did you know that RMT has a special low rate contribution?

If you are earning below £21,100 a year basic and paying more than £2.05 per week in contributions you may be eligible for a refund.

For more information on how to make a claim call the membership department on 0207 387 4771; the union's Helpline on 0800 376 3706 or alternatively contact your branch secretary.

All potential refund claims must be submitted on the appropriate form by March 1 2018.

Proof of earnings will be required.

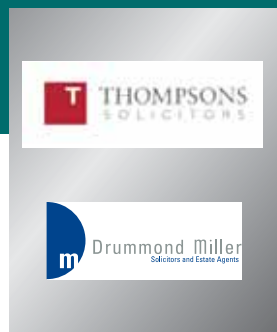
RMT STANDS UP FOR ITS MEMBERS

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)



PROTECTING AND PROMOTING OUR MEMBERS' INTERESTS



LEGAL

TRIBUNAL FEES, MARK TWO?



Lord Chancellor intends to bring back employment tribunal fees despite a Supreme Court ruling abolishing them last year

Following the government's announcement that the first people eligible for a refund of tribunal fees could apply, it has now opened up the scheme to everyone who is eligible.

This means that anyone who paid a fee to bring a case at an employment tribunal or the Employment Appeal Tribunal between July 2013 and July 2017 can now apply online if:

- they haven't changed their name since they made the claim to the tribunal

- the claim was against one employer

- they have a UK bank account.

The decision to refund fees followed a decision by the Supreme Court last year that the government order introducing

tribunal fees in July 2013 prevented access to justice and discriminated against women and, therefore, had to be quashed.

However, the story does not end there as the Lord Chancellor David Lidington made clear to the justice select committee when he appeared before them that the government still intends to charge fees as a contribution towards costs but also as a "deterrent to frivolous or vexatious litigation".

According to the Lord Chancellor, the key lesson that the government has taken away from the judgment is that fees are "a reasonable way in which to secure a contribution towards the running costs of the courts and tribunals service, but that in

setting the level of fees, the government need to have very careful regard to questions of access and affordability".

Iain Birrell, of Thompsons Solicitors, said that while it was true that the Supreme Court did not say that fees were unlawful per se, "but one wonders just how attentive the government has been".

"The government was totally schooled by the Supreme Court on the importance to society of an accessible and functioning justice system and any new fees regime will need very careful planning. "The current Lord Chancellor is held in higher regard than his recent ideologue predecessors, but that is a tall order and any proposals will be fiercely scrutinised. It therefore

seems a false start to bang on about vexatious claimants again.

"A vexatious claim has a specific meaning, and is not just one that the employer disagrees with; it is genuinely meritless and harassing.

"They do exist, but the numbers were always grossly exaggerated by the business lobby. The evidence of four years of excessive and unlawful fees shows that there is no correlation between fees and vexatious claims, and this is a discredited and hackneyed justification.

"As such it is a worrying sign that ideology may have the edge over evidence and reason in Whitehall once again," he said.



RMT LEGAL SERVICES

RMT has recently updated and improved a range of legal services provided for all members

RMT provides a wide range of legal services for its members subject to Rule for eligibility and legal assistance.

These legal services are provided by a number of sources. RMT now has a legal department staffed by four qualified solicitors available on 0207 084 7260.

In addition RMT uses Thompsons Solicitors in England and Wales for personal injury work and limited employment work. The union has also engaged the services of Thompsons in Scotland for the first time in order to centralise and regularise services in Scotland.

It is a separate firm to Thompsons in England and Wales RMT looks forward to working with Thompson's who currently deal with offshore members. Thompsons has offices in Edinburgh; Glasgow and Aberdeen and this spread of offices will improve legal services for RMT members.

RMT HELPLINES

England and Wales:

0800 376 3706

In Scotland and Off Shore members the number has changed to: **0808 068 5529** or email: info@rmt.org.uk

The lines are open 8:00-18:00 hours Monday-Friday, 9.30-16:00 hours Saturday.

This applies to all work and non-work related queries, for example, a matter of property, consumer or family law, or consumer problem etc. The service is run from RMT industrial relations department but does not extend to appointing a solicitor to advise and assist. The member is entitled to up to half an hour's time over the telephone, but cannot have documents considered, letters written nor have legal representation which they would have to arrange privately.

CRIMINAL HELPLINE

England and Wales:

0765 911 8181

In Scotland and Off Shore members the number has

changed to: 0800 089 1300

This covers legal assistance at police stations in respect of police charges arising out of a member's employment. Members may also ask for advice on this helpline before agreeing to take part in identification procedures, being charged or summonsed in respect of police charges arising out of their employment, the line can also be used for criminal matters arising out of work for advice. If a member is asked to attend or taken to a police station for questioning, they have the right to request the duty solicitor. Members should never attend a police station without having sought legal advice initially.

Members may use this helpline for non-work related and general criminal enquires.

RMT solicitors will not charge members for any initial advice given and welcome enquiries from members if they have any doubts as to whether they need legal representation.

The lines are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Legal representation may be provided to members in respect of police charges arising out of their employment. Should a member wish the union to provide legal representation for them then they may be eligible, subject to meeting the criteria, for assistance with their representation.

Once a member has received a copy of the charge sheet or the summons, (work-related criminal charges) they should contact their branch secretary. Consideration for legal assistance cannot be given until a member is formally charged or receives a summons to appear in a magistrates' court.

The branch secretary should complete the L3 form with the member and forward this with a copy of the charge sheet, and any other paper work of relevance to the legal department requesting representation.

The general secretary will then decide as to whether legal

representation will be provided after consulting RMT solicitors as to prospects. It has to be noted that this is a discretionary scheme and representation is considered on the case's merits and after assessment by solicitors.

PERSONAL INJURY

This service covers:

- RTA accidents to and from work where the member is injured, this also covers family members;
- accidents at work claims for members only
- industrial disease claims for members only
- non work related accidents for members and their families
- Clinical negligence is not covered by the scheme but members can use the numbers below to get expert general advice

The service is accessed:

In England and Wales by calling **0800 0 224 224**

In Scotland and Off Shore members by calling: **0800 022 4224**

ASSAULTS ON DUTY

Members that suffer an injury as the result of violent crime or are injured whilst trying to apprehend criminals or prevent a crime may be entitled to an award under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme (CICA).

An award will not be made if the offence was not promptly reported to the police or if any information is held back from them. The scheme will not pay compensation if it is assessed at under £1,000. A claim must be made within two years of the incident.

EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL CLAIMS

Should a member require legal assistance for an employment tribunal, they need to fill in an L2 form and pass this with as much relevant documentation as possible to their regional organiser.

The regional organiser has the ability to assist the claim, either through local negotiation to seek early settlement, advice on to how to follow grievance procedures and on how to submit a conciliation form to ACAS to comply with the strict time limits of three months less a day. It is a prerequisite to lodging a claim at an employment tribunal that member produces a certificate from ACAS that they have complied with conciliation requirement.

Regional officers will also help to compile all the necessary documentation to establish the case. Having authorised the L2 form the regional organiser sends all the documents to the Legal Department at Maritime House, Clapham Old Town, London, SW4 0JW where the case will be assessed by our in-house solicitors.

If the case is deemed to have reasonable prospects we shall provide representation if it is declined, the member will be advised accordingly and notified that the branch has the right to appeal my decision to decline representation. The case if appealed by the branch is referred to the NEC for consideration.

It is important to note first of all that not all employment issues can be resolved in the Employment Tribunal. The jurisdiction list on the website www.employmenttribunals.gov.uk shows the limit to the claims a Tribunal can determine.

FREE WILLS

This is a free service for a basic will, but a charge applies to any later amendments and to complex wills (see page 22).

DISCOUNT CONVEYANCING AND PROBATE

These are services members pay for at a discounted rate. These are provided by BBH for members in England and Wales; Thompsons in Scotland.

FREE ON-LINE WILLS SERVICE

New service allows RMT members to complete and download Wills ready to sign

RMT has introduced a new on-line Will service which allows you to write your own will immediately.

Your information and wishes are entered as you go through the questionnaire, just like they would be at a meeting with a solicitor, only you don't have to wait for the solicitor to draft the will, you just press a button and the will is printed and ready for you to sign at your convenience.

No special legal skills or IT experience are necessary, the system explains all the words and phrases that you come across when making a will as well as providing useful information about how the law on wills works in practice.

Client confidentiality and Data Protection are key considerations and so the on-line Will System operates in a safe and secure environment.

You don't have to complete the on-line questionnaire in one sitting, you can save the information you have entered and then re-visit the system at a later date to finish writing the will.

It is a good idea to map out your plans in writing and make sure you have details of full names and full postal addresses of everyone who you need to mention available before you start.

Your note of your plans should include the following information;

- the names and addresses of the people who you want to arrange your funeral and sort things out when you have died (the "Executors");

- if any gifts can't be paid right away for any reason then the people who look after the gifts in the meantime are called "Trustees" so you should also have their details to hand
- if you have young children then you can appoint "Guardians" to look after them when you have gone, if so, you'll also need their details to hand
- if you want any personal belongings to go to anyone in particular, make a list of items and put the name and address at the side of them to help you when filling in the questionnaire
- if you want to make gifts of cash amounts to anyone then make a list of the amount next to each person's details
- otherwise, you need to decide what fraction of what's left when you die goes to each person, so you might say "all to my widow, or if she's gone before me then equally between my three children but if any of them dies before me, their children get their share"

ONLINE WILL WRITING – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why bother, why not make a will with my local solicitor?

The RMT Online Will Writing System ("OWS") is FREE and allows you to write your own will immediately. Your information and wishes are

entered as you go through the questionnaire, just like they would be at a meeting with a solicitor, only you don't have to wait for the solicitor to get round to drafting the will, you just press a button and the will is printed and ready for you to sign at your convenience.

What about legal advice that I might need before I make a will?

As you follow the step by step process and complete the online questionnaire, basic information is provided along the way. It must be remembered that the free will writing service is only designed for people who only need a simple will and should not be treated as an alternative to obtaining specialised legal advice.

How hard is it to use the online will writing system?

No special legal skills or IT experience is necessary, the system explains all the words and phrases that you come across when making a will as well as providing useful information about how the law on wills works in practice.

Is my personal information safe?

Client confidentiality and Data Protection are key considerations and so the OWS operates in a safe and secure environment.

What if I have to stop part way through the process?

You don't have to complete the online questionnaire in one sitting, you can save the

information you have entered and then re-visit the system at a later date to finish writing the will.

The information is retained for six months so you have plenty of time to go back to finish your will.

What if I don't have time to think about what I want whilst I'm on the computer?

RMT recommends that you map out your plans in writing and make sure you have everyone's full names and full postal addresses to hand before you start.

Your note of your plans should include the following information;

- the names and addresses of the people who you want to arrange your funeral and sort things out when you have died, (the "Executors")
- if any gifts can't be paid right away for any reason then the people who look after the gifts in the meantime are called "Trustees" so you should also have their details to hand (although your executors can also be your trustees)
- if you have young children then you can appoint "Guardians" to look after them when you have gone, if so, you'll also need their details to hand
- if you want any personal belongings to go to anyone in particular, make a list of items and put the name and address at the side of them to help you when filling in the questionnaire

- if you want to make gifts of cash amounts to anyone then make a list of the amount next to each person's details
- otherwise, you need to decide what fraction of what's left when you die goes to each person, so you might say "all to my widow, or if she's gone before me then equally between my three children but if any of them dies before me, their children get their share."

What things aren't covered by the will?

This is a free service which is not intended as a substitute for specific professional advice and which should only be used by people with straight forward personal and financial circumstances.

The service is limited to one free will per person, so it is not possible to up-date an older will via this system.

If you have foreign assets, own a business, fall into the Inheritance Tax bracket, have unresolved financial issues following a divorce or separation, wish to avoid Care Fees or have dependants but wish to disinherit them then you must get specialist professional advice before making your will and you may also need other legal services in addition to the will.

Where can I get specialist legal advice if the free online service is not appropriate in my case?

Thompsons Solicitors and BBH Legal Services Limited and Thompsons Scotland offer a range of legal services the cost of which is discounted for RMT members and which include solutions for issues such as estate planning for tax and care fees, protecting assets for your family from claims by third parties, making complex wills, setting up and running trusts, Probate, Powers of Attorney and Court of Protection work.

If member wishes to make a general enquiry concerning the will they can call 0151 326 2188 in England and Wales or 0808 068 5529 in Scotland and off shore members. They can also contact

willrequest@thompsons.law.co.uk

President's column



38 DEGREES

Recently a 38 Degrees campaign was launched by Ellie Ward after she travelled on Merseyrail from Liverpool Central to Ellesmere Port.

During that journey, the guard on duty noticed that a man appeared to be following her and another woman and acting suspiciously. The guard advised both to sit near him and no incident occurred.

Reflecting later, Ellie decided she would do all she could to ensure that guards remained on the trains and that's where 38 Degrees came in with over 20,000 signing up to the campaign. so who are 38 Degrees?

It was founded in the memory of Anita Roddick, a lifetime champion of the power of ordinary people to make a difference. The project was developed by Ben Brandzel, Nina Kowalska, David Babbs and Warren Puckett

The founders were inspired by the impact of advocacy groups like MoveOn in the United States, GetUp in Australia and Avaaz around the world. These groups have used the same model, technologies and techniques to mobilise nearly nine million people to campaign on issues important to their members.

The name 38 degrees is the angle at which a pile of snowflakes becomes an avalanche. When enough gather in the right place, they become an unstoppable force. 38 Degrees campaigns are inspired by this idea, giving individuals a chance to join an avalanche of people working together for a better world.

They are not connected to any political parties, and are funded by donations from their members, they believe as I do that power should rest with the people. Their 3 million members work together to:

- Defend fairness
- Protect rights

- Promote peace
- Preserve the planet
- Deepen democracy

In this age of modern technology, where more and more commutation is carried out online, organisations like 38 Degrees have a real opportunity to make a difference; the power of the people is not to be underestimated.

At this time of year we say goodbye to some of our RMT National Executive Committee members and welcome the newly elected ones.

Leaving us are Donny Shannon, Michelle Rodgers, Steve Shaw, Jeff Slee, Kathy Mazur and Karlson Lingwood and I would like to thank them all for the support they have given me over the previous two years.

I want to make a special mention regarding Kathy and Michelle, who have been powerhouses in the Boardroom and seeing them leave reminds me that we will have an all-white male NEC going forward.

I don't claim to have all the answers, but we really must do more to get our female and black and ethnic minorities members elected to senior positions within our organisation, as we really should reflect the members that we represent.

The President's position is that of the highest lay official we have and there has never been a woman or black and ethnic minority member elected to that position, that can't be right and must change.

"In our age there is no such thing as 'Keeping out of politics' all issues are political issues, and politics itself is a mass of lies, evasions, folly, hatred and schizophrenia."
[George Orwell]

In Solidarity, Sean Hoyle

CROYDE BAY CALLING

RMT members get five per cent off for holidays at this trade union-owned holiday resort in beautiful North Devon

Croyde Bay holiday resort has even more to offer this year with 28 new luxury lodges with three and four bedrooms sleeping up to 8-10 people available mid-2018 – register your interest now!

Self-catering, inter-connecting chalets that sleep up to six people are also available as well as top hotel accommodation and superb restaurant facilities.



UNISON Croyde Bay Holiday Resort and conference centre

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www.croydeunison.co.uk

For five per cent discount quote 'RMT' plus your membership number



PACKED OBAN AGM

Oban Shipping branch met on St Andrews Day towards the end of last year to discuss comprehensive reports from national secretary Steve Todd, regional organiser Gordon Martin on issues including CalMac, Northlink and Orkney Ferries.

NEC member Paul Shaw, CalMac Co-ordinator Brian

Reynolds and learning organiser Dan Henderson also addressed the meeting.

The union's SOS 2020 campaign was discussed at length including some of the successful events already held in Scotland and future events still at the planning stage.

Branch secretary John MacDonald said that the most

pleasing aspect of the meeting was the number of young members present that played an active role in the meeting.

"I sincerely hope they will attend future meetings when possible.

"With our branch plans for 2018 already submitted to the regional council I am convinced that with the support of the

union the future of Oban Shipping branch is very bright and I look forward to the challenges in 2018 and beyond with confidence," he said.

After the business was concluded the famous branch raffle was held followed by a social event which was enjoyed by all.





Why choose a mutual insurance company?

Find out what sets apart a mutual insurance company from the rest, what benefits we offer you and why you are always the top priority.

For over 125 years UIA Mutual has been providing value for money home insurance to trade union members and families.

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UIA Mutual Insurance explains the benefits of a mutual company.

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A mutual insurance company is owned by its policyholders, not by external shareholders. They work only for the benefit of their policyholders.
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reinvest their profits into the company so they can keep future insurance premiums competitive and improve the service you receive.

- **Shared values**

With a mutual insurance company, you can be sure your values are shared by the company and staff. This means a people-focused service where the staff really listen and your number one concerns are equally shared by the company.

- **Trust**

Mutual companies have to remain financially transparent as a result of being owned by policyholders, so you always know how your money is being used.

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For more information on financial mutual companies and their benefits, see the Association of Financial Mutuals' website: www.financialmutuals.org
www.fscs.org.uk/globalassets/press-releases/20151111-fscs-trust-white-paper-final.pdf

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A HERITAGE RAILWAY FOR THE PEOPLE

Retired RMT rep and Minehead Rail Link Group press officer David Latimer says it is time to re-open lost West Somerset rail routes

Ever since British Rail closed the Minehead branch line in the 1960s under 'Beeching's Axe', locals have been calling for the line to be re-opened right through from Taunton. Shortly after closure, a local railway association was established and one of the aims was to reopen a rail service to Taunton.

However it became apparent that it would take some years to get the line fully operational as far as Bishops Lydiard, the first station out of Taunton on the Minehead branch line, let alone establish a commuter service through to Taunton.

So the line ended up as a steam railway heritage line between Minehead and Bishops Lydeard, although the section of track linking it to the Great

Western main line and Taunton remained in situ for the purposes of stock movements, occasional excursions and periodic freight trains bringing in stone for sea-defence work.

The dream of many local people as well as railway staff - of linking the line to the national network by way of commuter services to Taunton and Bristol - never died, and a number of attempts to get things moving again were made over the years, but to no avail.

Then in 2015 Minehead Chamber of Commerce Chairman Alex de Mendoza and myself got together to form the Minehead Rail Link Group (MRLG) and very quickly a number of local councillors became involved.

The aim was to work with

local authorities to see if ways could be found to extend some of Great Western Railway's Cardiff/Bristol to Taunton services over the West Somerset heritage line to Minehead.

MRLG became part of national rail promotional group Railfuture, which has been hugely influential in getting lines or stations reopened across the country. Contact was soon made with the West Somerset Railway, Great Western Railway and local authorities and informal and friendly meetings were held to establish lines of communication and exchange ideas, without any commitments being made at this stage, by any parties.

Following considerable media coverage and support from local businesses and residents of West

Somerset, the Minehead Rail Link Group grew and a robust management committee was formed to take the group forward.

Sponsorship was secured from many local firms and a covered marketing stand was created to mount displays in commercial centres across the area. Leaflets were distributed across the district, bringing in yet more support.

Train planning diagrams have been produced that prove there is capacity on most days to run at least seven GWR services off the main line through to Minehead, whilst still retaining capacity for a steam train service between Minehead and Bishops Lydeard, although it is accepted that there would have to be some adjustments to

The Butlins Express, a service which operated between Bristol and Minehead in the Summer of 2007, but not since.



the steam train timetable in order for steam and GWR diesel trains to pass each other at the passing loops on the single track line.

It is also hoped that following the appropriate agreements with the Office of Road and Rail, the customary 25-mph speed restriction applied to heritage train services, could be raised on sections of the West Somerset Railway, where it is safe to do so.

In addition, MRLG has a vision of an inclusive and genuinely co-ordinated public transport system for West Somerset. This would involve working with bus operators to ensure that bus and rail would complement each other and link up to offer a genuine alternative to reliance on the car and to entice as many motorists as possible out of their cars and onto trains and buses.

Alex de Mendoza said that, until recently, many people didn't realise that we had a fully serviceable line between Minehead and Taunton with trackwork, signalling and stations maintained to very high standards.

"It is ridiculous in this age of worsening traffic jams and increasing awareness of green issues and inclusion, that the section of line linking Bishops Lydeard to the main line is only used for occasional excursion trains and rolling-stock movements," he added.

The group realise that at present it would be impractical to extend the Minehead - Bishops Lydeard steam trains into Taunton, but believe some of the Great Western Railway's hourly Cardiff/Bristol to Taunton trains could be

extended to Minehead, giving West Somerset regular through trains to Taunton, Weston-super-Mare, Bristol and Cardiff.

The group believes such a service would reduce traffic congestion and parking problems as well as giving a realistic alternative means of travel to commuters, holidaymakers and the business community alike. In addition the service is the best practical way of reviving Minehead's waning holiday trade.

A fact-finding report and business-case study on a commuter service potential, has been produced by students from Susquehanna University in the United States. MRLG say the next step is to raise funding from local industry, regional development groups and councils for a professional feasibility study to be completed, then they can get down to serious talks with all parties, including trades unions,



Wilton Station – the halfway point on the Minehead Branch, circa 1961

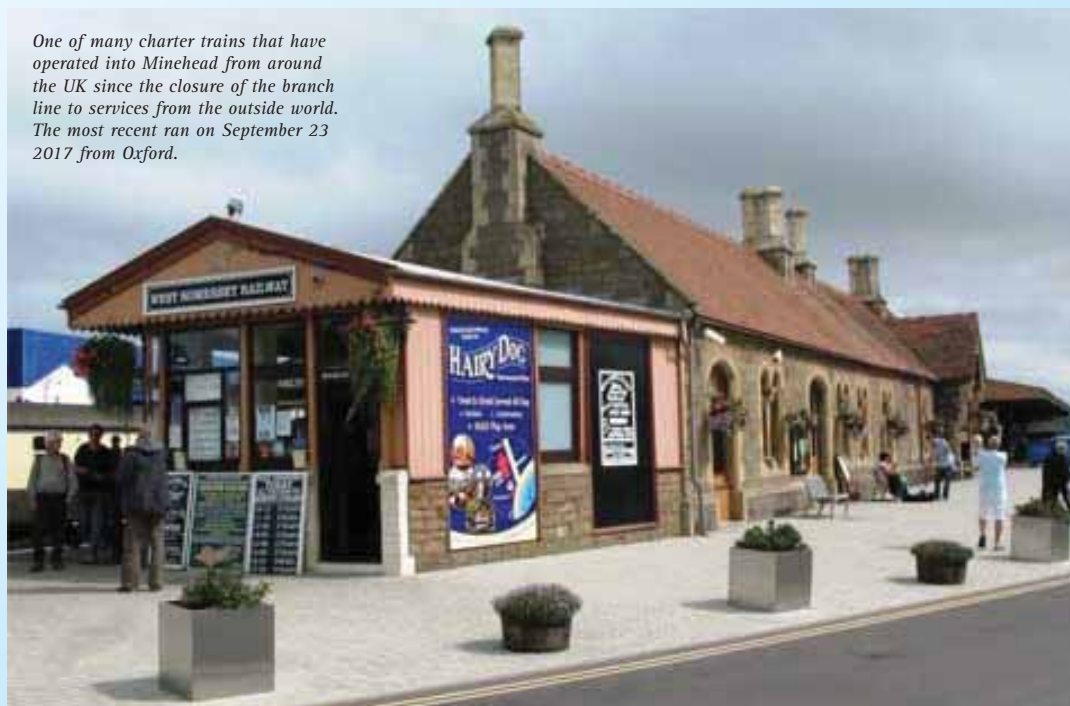
to see how the dream can become reality.

It is hoped that, with the co-operation of the local authorities, a feasibility study can be carried out into the proposal and then more detailed discussions can take place with the rail operators towards

achieving the long-held ambition of through services operating from Cardiff, Bristol and Taunton into Minehead.

For more information about the Minehead Rail Link Group go to www.mineheadraillinkgroup.co.uk

One of many charter trains that have operated into Minehead from around the UK since the closure of the branch line to services from the outside world. The most recent ran on September 23 2017 from Oxford.



CENTRAL LINE AWARDS

RMT assistant general secretary Steve Hedley presented long service awards to Adrian Rowe, Stefan Melnyk and Jimmy Tiffik of Central Line West branch.



BRUM AWARDS

RMT assistant general secretary Steve Hedley attended Birmingham Engineering branch to present Mike Atherton with his 50-year badge and to present 25-year badges to Paul Rowley, Steve Hepple White and Tony Fisher and 10-year badges to Peter Smith and Adrian Poole.



NOTTS ANNIVERSARY

Nottingham and Derby branch Secretary Chris Doran received a cake to mark the ten year anniversary of the branch.



40 YEAR AWARD



Newly-elected NEC member Del Marr presents Tony Noad with his 40-year medallion.

REGARDING PPP

Dear editor,

I have a question on behalf of members that work at Morden depot. On page 7, of the last edition of RMT News it points out that the Public Private Partnership (PPP) on the London Underground has come to an end.

But I believe that you may be mistaken as I work on the Northern Line for Alstom and we have heard nothing about being 'taken back in-house'. In fact I believe that Alstom was a sub-contractor to Tube Lines, who in turn was a contractor to Transport for London. As far as we can work out, we no longer answer to Tube Lines but now

answer directly to TfL.

I can still remember the day that we transferred over from the London Underground to Alstom and ever since then we have always hoped that we would go back to TfL again. Therefore we were very surprised to see this article as we have not heard anything about it ourselves.

So if I may ask on behalf of myself and my colleagues at Morden, does this transfer include us? As we were the original big experiment for PPP and, over the years, we have seen nothing that would benefit TfL or us from it. Name withheld

EDITOR'S NOTE

Thank you for your letter and the important issues it raises. In the article regarding the end of PPP in LUL and specifically the Jubilee, Northern and Piccadilly line(JNP) it was stated that all maintenance had been brought back into LUL.

This of course should have said that all those privatised under the PPP in 2002/3.

The previous privatisation of Northern Line train maintenance at Golders Green and Morden depots still remains outsourced to the private railway engineering contractor Alstom. RMT remains against this privatisation and is still campaigning to bring that in-house into LUL as well as the defunct Tube Lines. Sorry if this was not clear and we hope that this is helpful.

WIGAN STATUE APPEAL



Wigan Heritage and Mining Museum (WHAMM) is appealing to the labour movement to help fund a statue, modelled on the one in the picture, to be erected in Wigan Town Centre to commemorate those affected by the mining Industry, from loss of life, health conditions and the collapse of the Industry.

The cost of the statue is an estimated £110,000 and £85,000 has already been raised through the campaign group. Wigan has a proud tradition of mining made a huge contribution to the Industrial revolution. Wigan miners shifted over 750 million tons of coal over the years and boasted over a thousand pits over three centuries making it, per square mile, the most populated town in Lancashire for working mines.

Wigan also suffered two of the county's biggest mining disasters in

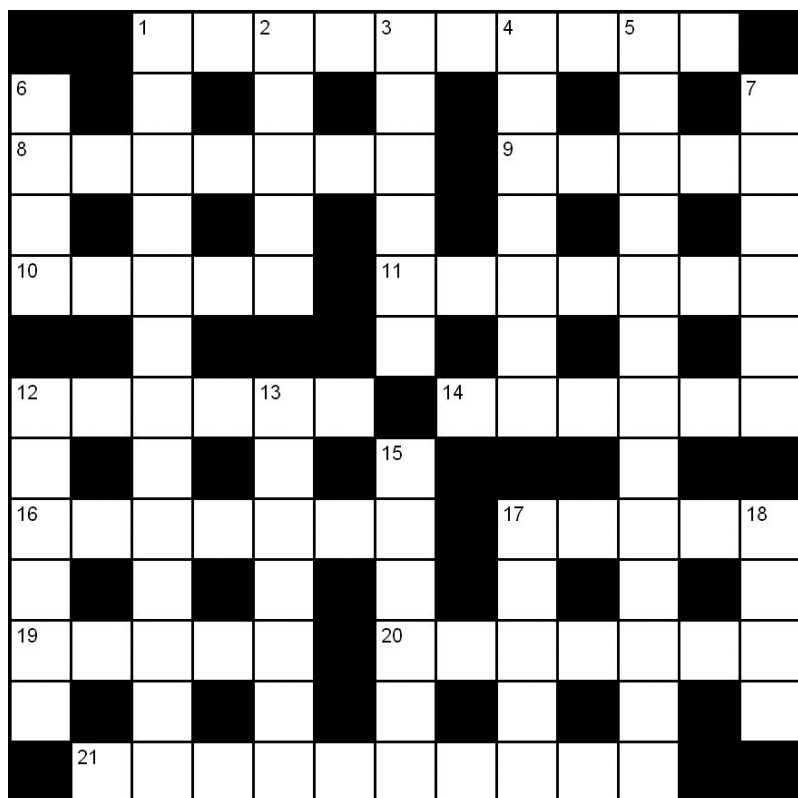
1908 when seventy five lives were lost at Maypole Pit due to an underground explosion. Two years later 345 workers lost their lives at Pretoria Pit near Westhoughton.

Wigan and NEC member Steve Shaw said that the statue was of great importance to the people of Wigan where the carnage left behind from Thatcher's assault on the mining Industry will never be forgotten.

"It destroyed families and communities in the process, something this town will always despise her for.

"Your union has already donated to this worthy cause but I would appeal to branches and regional councils to donate generously towards this monument and help us reach the target. Please donate through the following link <http://www.justgiving.com/wigan-heritage>. ■

£50 PRIZE CROSSWORD



Last month's solution...



The winner of last month's prize crossword Winner R Stone, Andover.

Send entries to Prize Crossword, RMT, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD by January 15 with your name and address.

Winner and solution in next issue.



Crossword sponsored by UIA

ACROSS

- 1 Apparently (10)
- 8 Fill (7)
- 9 Name (5)
- 10 Express (5)
- 11 Incompetent (6)
- 12 First light of day (6)
- 14 Paradise (6)
- 16 Decoration (7)
- 17 Heron (5)
- 19 Striver (5)
- 20 Serious (7)
- 21 Indignation (10)

DOWN

- 1 Getting worse (13)
- 2 Dish (5)
- 3 Regretful (6)
- 4 Ask (7)
- 5 Correct (6,7)
- 6 Small land mass (4)
- 7 Japanese hostess (6)
- 12 Expose to fresh air (6)
- 13 Pensioner (7)
- 15 Spurn (6)
- 17 Lofty nest (5)
- 18 Ballet wear (4)

RMT CHRISTMAS CLUB

SAVE FOR CHRISTMAS 2018 THE EASY WAY WITH THE RMT CREDIT UNION

Saving for Christmas can be a real headache. Take some of the stress away by saving over the course of the year with the RMT Christmas Club. We'll add a little extra to your savings and pay out the money ready for your Christmas shopping spree. This account is designed for people who want a secure savings account that helps them to save for their Christmas spending.

It's based on the traditional Christmas Club principle of saving a fixed amount each month that is not accessible until the payout date. Many people like the discipline of a regular savings programme where they are not able to access the cash!

Even a small amount saved each month soon adds up. Saving is made easy by Direct Debit either monthly or 4-weekly to suit your pay cycle.

For our Christmas Club, the maturity date will be November 4 each year. We will add a bonus dividend at the maturity date and pay the money direct to your bank account. There are no vouchers or hampers or anything of that kind – you decide how you want to spend your

money.

The bonus will be added to your savings if you complete all of your regular payments. Last years bonus was 2 per cent*, and we hope to improve this in subsequent years as the Christmas Club grows.

As all of your Christmas Club money will be paid out each year it will be kept separately from your regular credit union savings and cannot be used against credit union loans.

There is also a summer savings club account on the same basis and principle with a payout date of mid-June, so that you can have ready access to summer holiday spending money.

If you want to open a Christmas Club account and are already a credit union member simply complete the form below. If you are not already a credit union member you will have to complete the form below and the credit union membership application opposite.

Completed forms should be returned to our freepost address.

** NB: Past bonus rate is not an indication of future bonus rate*

TERMS & CONDITIONS – IMPORTANT INFORMATION - WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT RMT CHRISTMAS CLUB

- You need to be an RMT Credit Union member to open an RMT Christmas Club Account.
- You have to save at least £5 per month into a regular RMT CU account in addition to your RMT Christmas Club Account.
- You pay a monthly or 4-weekly Direct Debit consisting of your nominated Christmas Club payment (min. £10) plus at least £5 per month to your main RMT CU account.
- Christmas Club accounts have to be opened by the end of April. Late applications commence the following November.
- As an RMT CU member you build up regular savings with a yearly dividend (1.5% in 2011) and you can apply for low interest rate loans.
- Your Christmas Club money is separate from your regular savings account. That means you will have a guaranteed sum available for Christmas maturing every 14th November, plus a savings account growing with time.
- The Christmas Club secures your money so it's there for the Christmas period. This means that your money is locked-in and you can make no withdrawals until 14th November when all of your money, plus dividend will be paid out.
- If you make all of your payments we anticipate a dividend bonus as accrued through the year
- All of your money will be paid to your bank account on the first working day after 14th November.
- If you cancel your payments the 2% dividend is not applied and you cannot withdraw your money until after 14th November. If you think you will need access to your money before 14th November, this account is not suitable for you.
- The Christmas Club will continue year-on-year, so payments after 14th November start the next year's account. Of course if you wish to cancel your payments you are free to do so at any time.

Your savings are fully protected for up to £50,000 by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme

Cut here

RMT CHRISTMAS CLUB APPLICATION

RMT Credit Union Account Number (If known)							
Surname			Address				
Forename(s)							
Home phone							
Mobile							
email			Postcode				
Date of birth			NI Number				
Employer			RMT Branch				

Do you save monthly on 28 th ?		Or 4 -weekly (Fri)?		You can save by calendar month or 4 -weekly			
How much do you save in your RMT Credit Union Account ?				£	min. £5 per month		
How much do you wish to save in your Christmas Club Account ?				£	min £10 per month in £5 multiples		
The total each period for both accounts on my Direct Debit is				£	the total month/4 -weekly		
This is the total amount you wish to save by Direct Debit monthly on the 28th or 4-weekly							

Remember that if you have a loan with us your regular Direct Debit will also include that repayment

DECLARATION

I understand the Terms & Conditions of the RMT Christmas Club Account and that membership of the RMT Credit Union is a condition of holding an RMT Christmas Club Account. I understand that my monthly savings into the RMT Christmas Club cannot be withdrawn until the maturity date which is on or after 14th November each year.

Your Signature		Date			/		/				
----------------	--	------	--	--	---	--	---	--	--	--	--



Britain's Largest Specialist Transport Union



**CUT
FARES**
NOT GUARDS!

A large yellow rectangular sign is held up by a silver pole. The sign has the words 'CUT' and 'NOT GUARDS!' in black, and 'FARES' in large red letters. A pair of black scissors is positioned as if cutting through the word 'FARES'. The sign is set against a dark green background with white silhouettes of a crowd of people.

- X** **FARES UP**
- X** **PROFITS
BEFORE SAFETY**
- X** **CRAMMED,
UNRELIABLE
TRAINS**

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