

RMT *news*

Essential reading for today's transport worker

GREATER ANGLIA GUARD GUARANTEE



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www.rmt.org.uk

WORKING FOR YOU

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 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

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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.
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EDITORIAL



MEMBERS AT GREATER ANGLIA SHOW THE WAY

Firstly I want to pay tribute to RMT members on Greater Anglia whose grit and determination throughout a long hard campaign has secured an agreement that enshrines the guard guarantee on their trains.

Greater Anglia is the latest in a number of negotiated settlements that the union has been able to achieve through our industrial, public and political campaigning aimed at putting safety, security and access on our railways at the top of the agenda.

That is why it is so frustrating that a rump of train companies, including the crisis-hit Northern Rail, have failed to take note of what is going on elsewhere in the industry and continue to jam their heads in the sand.

Let's be clear, the government strategy on the new fleet and new franchise agreements was to burn off the union and bulldoze through driver-only operation as the industry norm. The McNulty Report said it clearly and the DfT's franchising supremo, Pete "Punch Up" Wilkinson let slip exactly what their plans were at the infamous Croydon Tory Party meeting. They had failed to factor in the strength and resilience of RMT members and over two years later we are still fighting, still campaigning and still winning the battle for public support. That campaign goes on.

We have major industrial issues looming large in other parts of the union now as well. Current pay agreements on both Network Rail and London Underground come to an end at the end of December and the end of March respectively and the union is shaping up its claims and preparing the ground for campaigns that protect and

enhance our members pay and conditions in these days of austerity.

RMT's work in the maritime sector remains a priority and there will be a fresh wave of activity around our SOS2020 campaign keeping the scandal of jobs, low pay and the whole long-term future of the shipping industry in Britain as we prepare to exit the EU right under the spotlight.

On the political front the union's fight for public ownership across the transport sector, keeping the shocking and continuing attacks on the bus industry in the broader picture, also continues to push ahead and with the shocking treatment of passengers now a regular feature on the daily news it is RMT's constant pressing of the case for nationalisation, now supported by the Labour Party, that is cutting through.

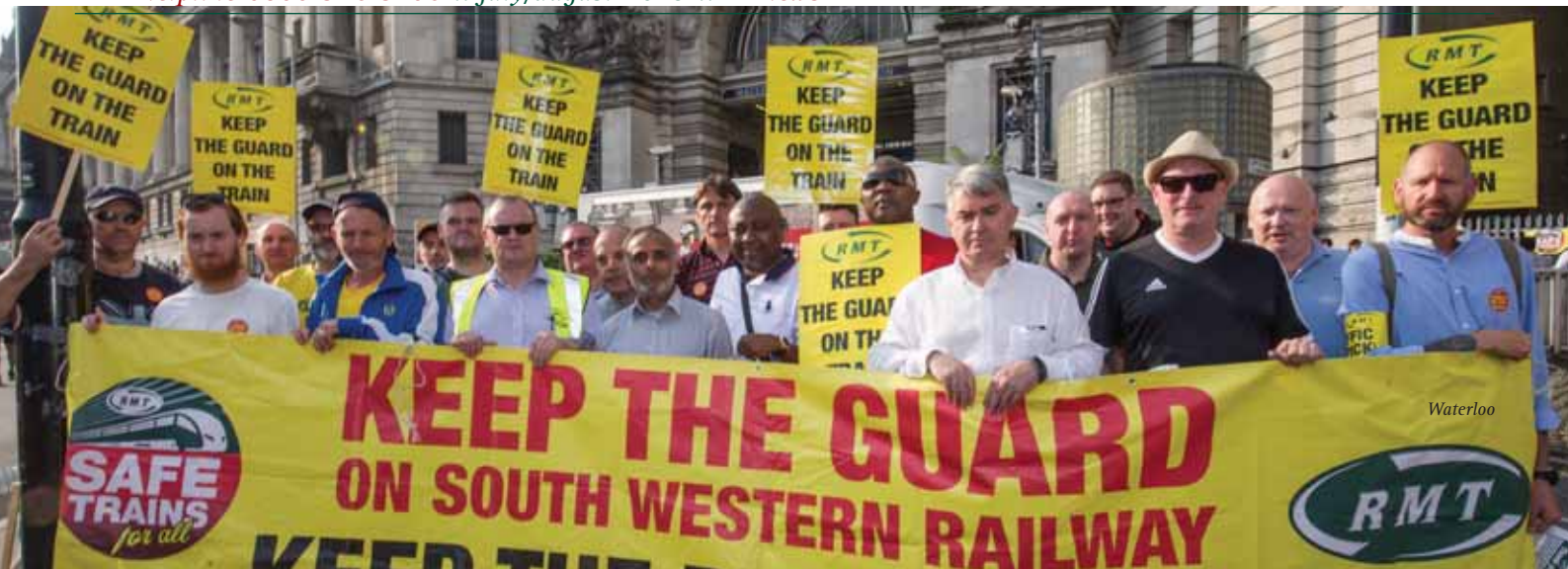
So we mustn't underestimate our success as a trade union in this hostile environment, fighting on all fronts in unity and solidarity as we face up to the challenges of today and the new challenges that lie ahead. It is you, our members, who are making the difference and I want to thank you for your loyalty to our campaigning, fighting and democratic union.

On a personal note I am proud of what we have achieved together in our member-led trade union and I want to take this opportunity to confirm that I will be seeking a fresh mandate next year to carry on delivering the programme of work you have set out for us.

Mick Cash

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When you have finished with this magazine give it to a workmate who is not in your union.



SWR STRIKE ACTION

RMT members on South Western Railway launched programme of industrial action in July.

However the union has agreed to suspend the next 24 hours of strike action to allow for further talks around the issue of the guard guarantee.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said the union had continued to work hard to reach a negotiated settlement over the guards' safety dispute.

"Our members are striking again to put public safety before private profits and it's about time SWR took note of what is going on elsewhere in the rail industry, and the settlements RMT has struck that underpin the guard guarantee, and started talking with us seriously around a similar package that puts safety, security and access to services top of the agenda," he said.



The union has argued that axing guards and cutting station staff has left disabled passengers stranded with Govia Thameslink Railways a repeat offender which flies in the face of the Department of Transport's latest accessibility strategy report.

"That is why we call on the rail industry, and specifically South Western Railway where we are striking over the threat to the guards, to recognise this fact and guarantee that the guard will be on board the train to deliver accessibility for all," said Mick Cash. ■



GREATER ANGLIA GUARD GUARANTEE

Deal on Greater Anglia halting the extension of driver-only operation shows the way

RMT has secured an important breakthrough in the long-running campaign over rail safety, security and access after members on Greater Anglia voted by nine to one on a turnout of 80 per cent to accept a new offer enshrining the guard guarantee on services.

RMT hailed the strength and resilience of members on Greater Anglia through 12 days of strike action over almost a year which has been the corner

stone in securing the significant breakthrough.

The union said that the Greater Anglia agreement showed what can be won through serious negotiations with train operators and now turns the spotlight on South Western Railway and Northern.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash paid tribute to RMT members on Greater Anglia who's long and determined struggle over the core issue of a

railway that's safe, secure and accessible for all has been the foundation of the agreement approved in the referendum ballot.

"It is the resilience of RMT members over almost a year that has secured the guard guarantee on Greater Anglia trains that we have been seeking.

"They are a credit to the entire trade union movement.

"The agreement comes after

similar deals have been done, including negotiated settlements across Scotland and Wales, that have the guard guarantee at their core.

"We now need to roll that principle out to the train companies where we remain in dispute and deliver the kind of safe, secure and accessible railway for all that the travelling public rightly demand," he said.





UNIPART STRIKE ACTION

RMT Unipart rail members took strike action last month in a battle over pay and conditions.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash congratulated members for standing firm in rock solid action.

"The company should wake up and take note of the anger on the shop floor over the attacks on pay and working conditions and should get back round the table and negotiate a deal that delivers workplace justice," he said.

EUROSTAR STRIKE

Eurostar station staff based at St Pancras took 24 hour strike action recently in a dispute over shocking and dangerous working conditions resulting from repeated service failures and breakdowns.

The international terminal at St Pancras has been reduced to chaos, with staff left to bear the brunt of public anger, following a spate of service problems that have dumped thousands of

passengers on the cramped concourse at St Pancras as the season heads towards its summer peak.

RMT has repeatedly demanded action to improve conditions but with nothing tangible coming from Eurostar there is no option but to strike.

RMT is also balloting train managers over the same issues and workers at the French end of the Eurostar operation have

also registered their disgust at the appalling conditions and have taken action in an attempt to force the company to act.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that conditions at St Pancras had been simply appalling with dangerous levels of overcrowding on the concourse as services plunge into meltdown on the cusp of the busiest part of the year.

"RMT will not tolerate a

position where our members are left to pick up the pieces due to corporate failures.

"RMT is escalating this dispute with a ballot of train managers and it is now time for Eurostar to get their heads out of the sand, recognise the seriousness of the current situation and come forward with proposals that address the issues our members have been raising with them," he said. ■

PICCADILLY LINE PROGRESS

Strike action by drivers on the Piccadilly Line was suspended last month following significant progress in extensive talks through the conciliation service ACAS.

The dispute remains on as the union monitors the agreement concerning insufficient driver numbers, management pressure on drivers, obstruction of trade union duties and draconian application of attendance and

sickness policies.

Significant progress was made in each of these areas which allowed the strike action to be suspended.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash congratulated RMT Piccadilly Line members for their resolve throughout this dispute.

"It is their unity and solidarity that has given us the leverage in the talks process to

secure the significant progress on the issues that triggered our action in the first place and which has enabled our Executive to suspend the strike.

"Each of the areas at the heart of this dispute have now been addressed in a way that has been sufficient to allow the union to suspend the action scheduled to start at nine pm this evening.

"The dispute remains on as

we monitor all of the changes and improvements and specifically the guarantees to improve train operators working lives.

"As always, RMT remains vigilant and the union will continue to closely monitor developments and actions as we move forwards and that position holds good for the rest of the London Underground operation," he said.



Further Strike action by Transplant train maintenance and stores staff at London Underground's crucial Ruislip Depot was again rock solid.

The action is over a dispute about pay parity and payments

associated with Train Preparation based on the duties staff undertake in their role.

The Ruislip depot has full responsibility for operation and maintenance of London Underground's fleet of engineering trains and it's on

track plant providing engineering services and haulage on a 24/7 basis to support the capital's tube network capital investment programme and on-going maintenance demands.

RMT general secretary Mick

Cash said that members were angry and frustrated that efforts to reach a negotiated settlement to this dispute had been kicked back at every turn by London Underground and more action is planned.

MOB ATTACKS RMT OFFICIAL

Senior assistant general secretary Steve Hedley describes the July attack by a far right mob

I heard some chanting behind me about "Tommy" then felt something smash on the left side of my face seconds later my partner was hit in the ribs by a flying metal chair launched by Tommy Robinson supporting thugs.

It was a glorious Saturday afternoon around 3pm. I was enjoying my second pint with my partner Bridget, one of our branch secretaries Kym and a trade union activist nearing retirement age Mike. We had been to a counter protest to the pro Trump /free Tommy Robinson demo where I had the honour of speaking against the rise of the right on behalf of my union.

Somewhat ironically I had warned in my speech that the EDL/DFLA were scapegoating minorities today but could well be attacking picket lines tomorrow. The words seem somewhat prophetic in retrospect as I and several other RMT members including a former president, executive members past and present, a regional secretary and another assistant general secretary were all the subjects of a violent unprovoked attack by the Tommy Robinson supporting

scum.

I use the word subjects deliberately instead of the word victims as we refuse to buy into the cult of victimhood so prevalent recently on the left which only encourages the far right. We were attacked and we defended ourselves there were many injuries on both sides and although we were outnumbered it was our attackers who withdrew from the fray.

In understanding the dynamics of the rise of alt far right its necessary to place it in national and global contexts. In Britain a neo liberal Labour Party abandoned the working class with a strategy of triangulation to capture middle class votes. This left us without a mainstream political party to represent our interests and the void was filled by the far right, firstly by the BNP and later by UKIP and the EDL. New Labour pursued Thatcherite light policies ,privatising, deregulating and refusing to build council housing so badly needed in working class communities .

Up popped the far right and offered the solution of you can have that Muslims job or that Asian familys house or your

hospital is inaccessible and wages are low because of immigrants. Unfortunately, in the absence of any credible left alternative, some people were sucked in. A similar situation prevails across the Atlantic with the Democrats abandoning class politics and pursuing a neo liberal globalisation agenda whilst adopting a conscious strategy of identity poilitics which ultimately divides the working class.

The remedy to the rise of the far right is for the trade unions and Labour Party is to return to the politics of class struggle and get rid of divisive and destructive identity poliics.

When we start delivering decent jobs wages and conditions to workers combined with decent public housing and services then the ground will be cut from under the far rights' feet. Corbyn could play a leading role in this providing he and his supporters start standing up to the right in the Labour Party and stop capitulating to them .

There is no doubt the far right are on the crest of a wave and the election of Trump has made racism and bigotry acceptable. The far right street

thugs feel confident enough to attack trade unionists in broad daylight in Westminster followed by an attack on the Bookmarks socialist bookshop two weeks later. A combination of an international alliance of far right parties which Steve Bannon is seeking to further develop could theoretically rise to prominence in Britain fronted by the remains of UKIP and supported by the EDL/DFLA street fighters on the ground. Trade unionists and socialists have a duty to mobilise against them both politically and on the street.

Fascism will never truly be defeated whilst capitalism still exists as Bertolt Brecht said after World War Two "the beast is dead but the bitch is pregnant". In times of crisis the ruling class will always use fascists to attack the workers movement .

That is why our union has set up a stewarding group to protect our members and why we make it clear in the RMT rule book that we are working for the "supersession of the capitalist system with a socialist form of society". Only when socialism is achieved will the fascist beast finally be laid permanently to rest. ■



Steve Hedley addresses rally

SCOTTISH POLITICS

Delegate Gary Buchanan reports from the latest RMT Scottish Political School

The second Scottish Political School took place in Edinburgh recently the second school since it was introduced last year.

Proceedings began with RMT regional organiser Gordon Martin welcoming all and a round table introductions session to break the ice before getting down to the business.

Dr Ewan Gibbs from the West of Scotland University addressed delegates and covered class politics and the history of the Labour movement in Scotland. He covered many aspects of the class struggle and touched upon some of the leading characters involved such as Lanarkshire-born James Keir Hardie who rose from very humble beginnings to become one of Scotland's most notable politicians and the first leader of the Labour Party.

Our second guest speaker was long-time RMT member and former STUC assistant general secretary Ann Henderson. Ann led off on the political challenges and opportunities for trade unionists in Scotland including re-nationalising the railway and the Scottish Government's Fair Work Framework. Ann also spoke about universal suffrage with particular emphasis made to the campaigning by the suffragettes for the right of women to vote. We learned more about Mary Barbour and the rent strikes she led in Glasgow during World War One.

Day two began with a discussion about how to campaign successfully on issues of importance to the union. The group identified companies where the political decisions are made by the Scottish government and others controlled by Westminster. We split into groups and explored the key benefits of in-house

employment and discussed strategies and tactics to secure campaign objectives.

We then headed down to the Scottish Parliament to be met by RMT Parliamentary group convenor Elaine Smith MSP assistant Lesley Dobbin. Lesley and her colleague Suzi gave us a presentation on the workings of the Scottish Parliament and some of the excellent work our cross-party group in the Scottish Parliament does.

Eight MSPs from our group came and spoke to us with the Labour Party, Greens and SNP all represented. The MSPs covered a wide variety of issues including transport with Jackie Bailey paying particular attention to an ongoing anti-social behaviour problem in her constituency and the involvement of the British Transport Police.

One of the delegates, Dennis Fallen from Glasgow 5 branch made reference to the fact that school children in Sweden are educated on the role of trade unions from an early age. Clare Haughey MSP found this interesting and said that she would look into it further.

The final day was spent in the Parliament for a tour by Lesley Dobbin which was educational with Lesley's knowledge second to none. We then took our seats in the public gallery for First Minister's Questions. Following FMQs we had a brief meeting with the First Minister and took the opportunity to have a group photo with her. Despite the brevity of the meeting Gordon Martin took the opportunity to challenge the First Minister on the weakness of the Fair Work Framework and the decision to put Northlink Ferries out to a tendering process rather than a direct award to the in-house

operator David Macbrayne.

This was followed by a meeting with Richard Leonard MSP, leader of the Labour Party in Scotland. We covered a number of political issues with Richard who was very generous with his time.

The delegates were very impressed with the fact that we were able to meet the leaders of three of the political parties in Scotland, Nicola Sturgeon SNP, Richard Leonard Labour and Patrick Harvie of the Scottish Green Party.

It only remains for me on behalf of the delegates who

attended the political school to thank Lesley and Suzi for their hospitality and attention to detail and James Croy and Gordon Martin for organising and delivering this fantastic course.

Delegates were Mandy Burke and Dennis Fallen of Glasgow 5 branch, Alistair MacArthur of Glasgow Shipping branch, Gary Pollock Stirling branch and Kenny Barclay, John Marshall, Mick Campbell, Gary Buchanan of Edinburgh no 1 and Portobello branch and Andy Ritchie, Fife and District.



Political school with Richard Leonard



Political school with Elaine Smith



Political school with Nicola Sturgeon



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RMT member, work accident claimant

*Within the union scheme. Terms and conditions apply. Claims must be brought within three years of the date of an accident or diagnosis. Exceptions do apply, please contact us for advice on whether or not you have a claim. **Where claims can be pursued in UK courts.

LEGAL

FATTER CATS OR ACCESS TO JUSTICE?

Without your help the government is going to penalise the injured warns Andrew Hutson of Thompsons Solicitors



Unfortunately injuries happen at work. Whether it is because employers fail to put in place and enforce proper systems or because health and safety isn't given the priority it should, Thompsons Solicitors ends up helping hundreds of RMT members every year who have been injured through no fault of their own.

However, while at present the law means we can hold employers to account if they are to blame for the injuries and ensure that whoever caused the injury picks up the bill for legal fees, the government want to change this.

In March, the government introduced the Civil Liability Bill into the House of Lords. The bill has now passed through the House of Lords and is due into the House of Commons from the 4th of September. The Civil Liability Bill is said by the government to be about tackling whiplash 'fraud' from road accidents. However, 'a package of measures associated with the bill' (for which read 'hidden from view'!) will deny access to

justice to hundreds of thousands of people injured at work or on the roads every year whose cases have nothing at all to do with whiplash.

Currently, anyone who is injured in a workplace accident or on the road can claim back the cost of getting legal advice if their injuries are worth more than £1,000. Whether the claim falls into the 'small claims limit' of £1,000 or outside it is calculated on the value of the injured person's compensation for pain and suffering. If the pain and suffering compensation is £999 or less, then regardless of what wage loss or expenses they may have had, the case is dealt with in the small claims court.

The government want to use hidden powers to increase the small claims limit from £1,000 to £2,000 for all cases, including accidents at work (which have nothing to do with whiplash), and to £5,000 for all Road Traffic Accidents (not just whiplash). That means that in any case where the pain and suffering value is less than £2,000 or £5,000 the injured

will either have to take on the insurers on their own or pay for a lawyer to help them from money that is meant to be compensation for their injuries and losses.

£2,000 and £5,000 is a lot of money for most workers, especially for many working in the rail, maritime or transport industry, yet the government think it's acceptable to leave people injured through no fault of their own to fight well-funded insurers on their own.

If this goes ahead as the government plans, it is estimated that at least half a million people every year will be left on their own and trade union legal services will be undermined. By this hidden move, that isn't even mentioned in the bill, the government is intending to turn over law that has stood for generations – they are doing away with a principle that the person who caused the injury should pick up the bill for the injured to get independent legal help and proper compensation.

The bill, with lots of government talk about a 'crisis'

with so-called 'fraudulent' claims and a 'compensation culture', is set against a backdrop of the government's own statistics, which show a 7% fall in the number of personal injury claims in the first quarter of 2018. Data from the Association of British Insurers also shows that the net cost of insurance claims has fallen by 42% since 2010.

The truth is that whiplash, "compensation culture" and "fraud" are a fig leaf to distract people from the government's true intentions: to reduce access working people have to justice and to pass £billions to the fat cats in the insurance industry.

With your help, we can undermine this insurer-backed bill. Help your union, help yourself and friends who might get injured in the future and put pressure on the government to think again by writing to your MP – there is a pre drafted letter at www.feedingfatcats.co.uk.

Follow @FeedingFatCats on Twitter and support our campaign.



BUS CUTS- TRANSPORT POVERTY



RMT vows to fight for the principle of access to transport services for all

RMT has warned of a growing epidemic of transport poverty as new research shows that funding support for buses has almost halved in the past eight years

Research by the Campaign for Better Transport (CBT) has revealed that local authority bus budgets were slashed by over £20 million last year and by a shocking £182 million since 2010 leaving many areas without public transport services.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that bus services were being ripped to shreds across the country through a toxic combination of funding cuts and cherry picking by the private operators.

"Whole communities are being cut adrift without any transport links, hitting the elderly, the vulnerable and the low paid the hardest.

"There is a growing epidemic of transport poverty in Britain rammed home by these shocking figures. Access to lifeline transport services is being ripped away from those who need it most," he said.

The CBT report *Buses in Crisis* found that since 2010/11, supported bus budgets have decreased by £182 million, representing a reduction of 45 per cent and some 199 bus routes were altered or withdrawn last year amid the decline in funding.

CBT public transport

campaigner Steve Chambers said that it confirmed that the slow death of the supported bus continues, with local authority bus budgets suffering yet another cut this year.

"The resulting cuts to services mean many people no longer have access to public transport, with rural areas hit especially hard," he said.

The loss of a bus service can have "huge implications" such as preventing people accessing jobs and education, increasing congestion due to a reliance on cars and affecting people's physical and mental health by making it harder for them to leave the home, researchers warned.

Martin Tett, transport

spokesman for the Local Government Association, insisted that councils are "desperate" to protect bus services.

"It's nearly impossible for councils to keep subsidising free travel while having to find billions of pounds worth of savings and protect other vital services like caring for the elderly and disabled, protecting children, filling potholes and collecting bins.

"Faced with significant funding pressures, many across the country are being forced into taking difficult decisions to scale back services and review subsidised routes," he said.



2018 AGM

Edinburgh

A FIGHTING DEMOCRATIC UNION

East Coast mainline brought back under public control during 2018 annual general meeting

AGM 2018 Edinburgh



RMT president Sean Hoyle

Delegates kicked off the 2018 annual general meeting in Edinburgh by gathering at Waverley Station to demand the wholesale re-nationalisation of Britain's railways as East Coast Mainline was once more taken off the privateers.

London North East Railways is now the brand name of the government's operator of last resort which has taken over the running of the service from failed Virgin Trains East Coast.

However this was only a temporary measure as Transport Secretary Chris Grayling has made it clear that he intends to re-privatise the East Coast.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash told conference that the government was on the run.

"After these private sector failures, on top of the Carillion debacle, you would expect even this ideologically blinkered UK government would not be hell bent on giving this essential national rail line back to another profiteering outfit, but they are!

"We've certainly got the chicken Grayling on the run," he said.

Vowing to "leave no-one behind", he said that the union had made huge progress in pushing the case for rail nationalisation up the agenda, noting the sea-change in Labour

policy.

"The importance of this should not be under-estimated because "it's bums on seats in the Palace of Westminster that matter.

"They voted for privatisation and they can vote for re-nationalisation. It's not a question of if there's going to be nationalisation, it's a question of when there's going to be nationalisation.

"While RMT is growing and getting stronger it is still difficult out there with continued attacks on jobs and conditions.

"We need to fight this race to the bottom in terms of workers' rights," he said.

He emphasised that "education and organising and campaigning are at the heart of what we do as a trade union", saying that 1,000 reps had undertaken training at the Bob Crow Education Centre in Doncaster last year.

"You'd have to live in Mars not to know who RMT are. We're the highest profile trade union in the country without a shadow of a doubt".

He said that transport workers had come under continued attack, citing the sharp decline in the number of seafarers as one of the worst examples.

"We've got to reverse it, and we ain't gonna reverse it by just accepting it as inevitable.

"We need unity across the sector because one union means that we don't get the divisions that we've seen where the employers use unions to divide and undermine us.

"We stand together, we're a united union, we're a determined union," he said.

With many members in dispute over the expansion of driver-only operation (DOO) on a number of companies, delegates debated a motion calling for "innovative" tactics

in industrial disputes.

Action such as working "as ordered" or "short rolling strikes" might be more effective when fighting "an enemy that cares neither for the service it is tasked to provide nor suffers financial losses for not providing it", the motion stated.

Steve Hedley stressed that where the union had been victorious against DOO, it was because "we forced them to the table by taking strike action.

"Before we get into a dispute we have to ask ourselves what we're ready for in that dispute.



Steve Hedley

AGM 2018 Edinburgh

"Please support this resolution but don't ever forget the way we've stopped DDO is through taking industrial action.

"Here's something we could do, we could talk to every driver and ask them to respect that line," he said.

Delegates called for a "joint memorandum" with rail companies and regulators for minimum training requirements amid concerns that safety was being compromised by deterioration in route-learning.

Glenroy Watson, Finsbury Park said: "As a train driver for some years I've seen the deterioration of training".

Millie Samuel, Wimbledon said: "I've been working as a guard for nearly 10 years, and I've noticed the eroding of our training.

"When you have a new guard and they've only looked at it through a video, a video is different to actually going somewhere in the night and in the day.

Jim McDaid, Bakerloo said that training had been "halved, completely" from 28 weeks to 14 for underground drivers.

"The drivers have been driving for quite a while and they're not confident with this new stock whatsoever," adding that "spads are through the roof" among new London Underground drivers.

Mike Sargent, Dover District General Grades said: "It's no accident they're eroding your safety standards, it's being done on purpose".

Stuart Holt, Central and North Mersey added: "This is about safety, safety, safety. It's about McNulty."

Steve Hedley condemned strikebreaking operators' use of "boil in the bag pugs" who on Greater Anglia "open the train doors on the wrong side, all the passengers were jumping around on the tracks".

He said that the ORR's inaction when complaints were made over this nailed the lie that the regulator was independent.

"It's a government

department.

"The first step in the battle is to persuade our members that it is not an independent body, they're a body completely on the side of the companies," he said.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Delegates unanimously adopted a motion from RMT's station grades conference for suicide prevention programmes run by the Samaritans in partnership with Network Rail and London Underground to be expanded across Britain's network.

The course trains staff to spot passengers who are at risk, and talking them out of jumping in front of trains.

Moving the motion, Kim O'Shaughnessy, Deptford movingly recounted the suicide of a colleague, saying that it was crucial that workers were trained to support those in need.

Cat Cray, Neasden said: "It can give us the opportunity to intervene when somebody is having a mental health crisis."

Zack Rosen, Plymouth No. 1 said the training "really opened my eyes".

Christine Willett, South East Essex said that the programme had transformed "a station which was virtually top of the league for suicides". But she warned: "no matter what training they give us, the real difference is staffing our stations."

Her comments were echoed by David King, Newcastle Rail and Catering who said: "The best suicide prevention you can have on stations is a member of staff".

Esther Burns, Glasgow 5 said that she had encountered a passenger who "wanted to end her life, and because I'd had this training I was able to talk to her, and I was able to save her life".

The resolution also called for "better support for staff post-incident and more available staff" to ease pressure on workers attempting to prevent suicide while also having to concentrate on essential

operational tasks.

Steve Hedley said:

"Somebody intervening there, at that time, does save a lot of lives.

"Some of those drivers that experience witnessing a suicide event they actually never drive a train again.

He said that private rail companies would only support staff in such matters "to cover themselves for legal claims", whereas workers could rely on their union to stand up for their best interests after these tragedies.

Delegates also voted to "confront the elephant in the room" and negotiate with employers the full implementation of the Stephenson/Farmer review's recommendations. This government-commissioned report into workplace mental health called on employers to set down six "mental health

core standards".

Keith Simpson, Chester called for the union to do what it does best, and "educate, agitate and organise" on the issue.

Adrian Libberton-Rowe, Central Line West, added: "Just asking the question, are you alright, that helps".

EDUCATION

Turning to the union's Bob Crow Education Centre in Doncaster, delegates called for courses to be formally accredited by recognised institutions. Mike Sargent said that further education was "under attack" in Britain.

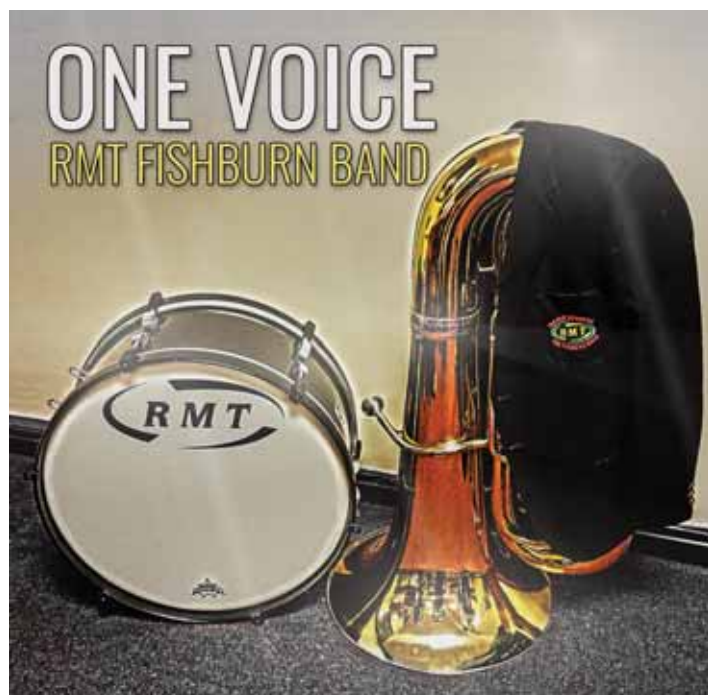
"We need to get people trained up in order that our education system has validity across the piece, nationally [and] your qualification is accepted, not just by us," he added.

Mick Cash said: "Whether a course is accredited or not, we



Mary Jane Herbison

AGM 2018 Edinburgh



RMT's legendary house brass band, the Fishburn Band, releases new CD 'One Voice'

RMT's Fishburn brass band are a regular sight at labour movement summer galas and events such as Tolpuddle, Durham and the Burston strike school rally.

They are just about to release a CD which can be purchased at the bands website which is located at: <https://fishburnband.homestead.com/>

It will include a booklet with the CD which gives a history of the band and its involvement with the union and how Bob Crow and Geoff Revell were not only involved but instrumental in bringing the union and the band together.

Hence the name of the CD One Voice and the Barry Manilow piece Bob liked so much as it was representative of the union and its members.

The cost will be £10 each with 25 per cent of this going to the British Heart Foundation and Willen Hospice, the two designated charities of Bob Crow and Geoff Revell.

still need to make sure when you learn stuff you put it into practice in one shape or form".

Delegates also heard a presentation from RMT learning officer Ola Akinwumiju, who said that the union's education service could create a "talent pipeline" among the membership.

RMT delegates also resolved to campaign against cuts to special educational needs and disabilities.

Describing how her son was

a special needs teacher, Kim O'Shaughnessy said: "People with the most important jobs are treated with the least care".

Andy Bradford, Exeter said: "It hurts me to see these cutbacks."

AGM also approved a call to campaign to LGBT "cure therapy".

Cat Cray said that there was "already a memorandum of understanding, but that does not carry the same weight as legislation".

She told the hall: "It's homophobia, biphobia and transphobia that need to be cured, not LGBT people."

Mick Cash said: "It's like back in the dark ages. It's just unbelievable what's happening."

"We're doing all we can to ensure we push back on these distorted, divisive, heinous views."

Another motion endorsed by delegates highlighted the massive issue of LGBT refugees being refused asylum and deported to countries where they would face prosecution.

First aid is another area where training has slipped, AGM heard.

Patrick Hull, Carlisle City said an "increasing problem" was the "erosion of the need for first aid training for on-train staff".

Highlighting the recent spate of acid attacks, he said: "New starters receive no first aid training. This is not acceptable."

Glenroy Watson said: "I really think the public don't know, the trains they're travelling on... the staff aren't trained for first aid".

Roderick Traynor, Wirral told delegates: "We asked for training for guards, they said 'you don't need it'."

William Strang, Edinburgh 1 and Portobello raised the concern that the motion's call for "alkaline water" to be included in first aid kits and training was wrong, saying "clear water" was instead appropriate.

Offering "very qualified support" on this basis, Steve Hedley said: "We have great sympathy with the resolution, the sentiments in it are fantastic." But he stressed the need to consult with RMT health and safety reps on appropriate courses of action".

HEALTH

Station staff raised the alarm over companies' occupational health departments overruling workers' own doctors. A raft of delegates cited examples of this happening in their workplaces, and questioned the presumption



of companies that they know better than specialist medics.

William Strang said: "If you owned a Lamborghini or Ferrari, would you take it to QuikFit?"

Steve Hedley concurred, arguing: "This isn't about getting people back to work in a healthy state".

He compared the practice of an "over-the-phone consultation with someone who hasn't been medically trained" with the DWP's treatment of benefit claimants, adding: "We can't allow this to come into our industry".

A key concern among catering grades was fatigue resulting from inadequate breaks. Andrew Bradford, Exeter 2 stressed the need for greater union organising among such grades.

Steve Hedley said: "The difference between us and the other unions in our industry is that we're an industrial union and we organise everyone."

There was also support for a "32-hour four-day week for clerical, supervisory and other salaried grades" to improve work-life balance".

AGM backed calls from signal workers for discussions between the union and Network Rail over the roll-out of

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Hitachi's Automatic Route Setting (ARS) system. This "cheap, not fit for purpose system", a motion stated, is "placing signalling staff at increasing risk of making safety-related mistakes". The ARS can only ask for it. If it's not available it can't happen. The ARS in principle has been used now for over 70 years."

Mick Cash said: "We're in a situation where there are some serious problems emerging.

"The reality is that the kit doesn't work properly but it does increase workload".

There were also serious worries that Network Rail was treating line blockages covering large areas of track in a similar fashion to smaller ones, compromising safety.

Martin Russell, Stockport & District said: "What they're doing now is using the more simplistic line blockages to do the more complicated stuff.

"What we're asking is to grade the line blockages [on the basis of] complexity."

But Mark Armstrong, Bridgend Llantrisant and District cautioned: "If we pass this resolution, it will mean more unsocial hours, more nights. I think we should be asking Network Rail to better plan their work, not trying to change the rule book."

Danny Drury, Orpington said: "We're doing major work on line blockages, it needs looking at, let's not sacrifice our safety for this."

Mick Cash said that the railway was dealing with the big challenge of only having "a few hours at night to do engineering work and trying to jam a lot more stuff into a smaller period.

"I'm asking you to pass the motion, but what we are seeing is change happening by stealth.

"What this will do is start a debate with the employer on how we control that agenda rather than it controlling us," he said.

Delegates also spoke of "the atrocious state of industrial relations within Network Rail maintenance" with "persistent



Brian Reynolds

attacks on terms and conditions". James Brown, Liverpool 5 spoke of workers "moved out the door on medical grounds".

Mark Armstrong said that managers were "making things up as they go along" in a fashion "completely against the agreements".

Les Harvey, LU Engineering, encountered "the frustration from colleagues in Network Rail every year".

RMT assistant general secretary Mick Lynch said that the union was "going to have a national ballot on stood off arrangements", but warned that it would have to strengthen its organising within Network Rail.

"It's easy for the company to try and find weak spots in our organisation.

"The frustration is national, and it's different issues in different areas.

"If they attack our terms and conditions, we will respond by balloting all our affected members.

"We should be vigilant when the issues come up, and militancy to defend the agreements," he said.

More specifically, the alarm was raised over Network Rail's Overhead Condition Renewals section abusing agreements by using a different Managing for Attendance procedure. This was

"being used to apply pressure on staff to work when sick".

Delegates unanimously backed a motion instructing the union to investigate the issue.

CLEANERS

Delegates unanimously endorsed a call by Jim McDaid, Bakerloo to campaign for sick pay entitlement for all cleaners.

"What we've got is exploitation of the working class in clear view and there's only one solution and that's to bring these roles back in-house.

"Not only do they deserve sick pay, they deserve travel expenses and travelcards," he said.

Mick Lynch said that cleaners were getting themselves heard in the union through their new organising conference.

"We owe them some solidarity, those of us that are working in-house – our pay claims have to include clauses for the cleaners.

"We're saying we must have a charter of standards for the contracted employers that are under the umbrella of each train-operating company until we bring them in-house," he said.

A second motion endorsed by AGM noted that the railway workforce was increasingly at risk from the use of a "hidden army" of foreign cleaners in the

industry.

It called for a "procedure that makes the right to work issue easier to deal with and not a nightmare that makes life even more complex."

Glenroy Watson accused employers of targeting them and making unreasonable demands for documentation.

"The reality is, what people are asking for is dignity," he said.

BUS WORKERS

Delegates heard bus workers' concerns that dangerously-low temperatures in driving cabs could potentially cause a "serious, life-threatening accident". A motion adopted by AGM said the union should "force the government and companies to stop ignoring this important problem". John Coom, Andover Bus said: "We've had bus drivers working on a cold day with no cab heating.

"Our employers don't have to deal with this problem because the cab isn't recognised as a workplace."

Lee Rundle, South Devon Bus said: "At the end of the day, it's going to be an accident that costs somebody's job, somebody's life.

Andrew Bradford, Exeter 2 added: "It's not a great thing to do sitting on a cold bus worrying about whether you're

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Jennifer Aggrey-Fynn

driving safely, especially on the country lanes.”

Mick Lynch shared these concerns but said: “The onus of responsibility for this is with the employer.”

The Highway Code offers insufficient protection for bus drivers, AGM heard. Delegates voted to lobby the government to amend the suggestion to “give priority” to buses, coaches and trams, to instead read: “Priority must be given to these vehicles.”

Mick Lynch joked: “We see this as a precursor to workers taking control of the highway code”.

SEAFARERS

A motion from the seafarers calling for a change of in the laws covering lifeboats was adopted by AGM. It called for a “similar model” to Australia, where lifeboats are lowered to the water line empty, and said that it was a “disgrace” that seafarers “are still instructed to put their lives in danger”.

Brian Reynolds, Glasgow Shipping, said that lifeboats were “designed to go out but

not to come back”.

Delegates also raised the alarm over the impact of “flagging out” vessels and crews on workers’ pensions. Some retired workers are now receiving “substantially less” than UK-based counterparts, a motion approved by AGM stated.

“We were told at the time there would be not detriment to anything we’ve got,” Brian Reynolds added.

PENSIONS

Two motions focused on the raising of the state pension age, and the impact of this on workers who retire early thanks to the conditions in the transport sector. The first affirmed support for the National Pensioners’ Convention’s campaign against raising the pension age, and warned of an “increasing gap” between this and “the age at which our members actually cease employment”.

The second called for the union’s executive to “develop policies and negotiation strategies designed to improve

the rail and transport staff pension funds in order to mitigate the effects of the increase”.

RMT retired members advisory committee secretary Tony Donaghy said that the retired members section of the union didn’t only work for pensioners.

“We are fighting for the future, for future generations and for decency and respect.”

Zack Rosen, Plymouth No1 warned of the consequences of an “ageing workforce” in transport.

Brian Reynolds said: “My concern is that the mandatory training seafarers have to receive is quite onerous.

“People approaching the age of 67 would have to go through firefighting courses”.

AGM also adopted a motion from the retired members’ advisory conference describing the funding model for social care as “precarious and unsustainable”, and urging the creation of a national care service.

Ron Douglas of the National Pensioners’ Convention said: “Our position is that we should make care fair.

“Those who have to pay for care often face large bills, even to the extent they have to sell their homes to pay for the care they so desperately need,” he

said.

Steve Hedley said: “The class war is running, but only one side is fighting, and that’s them and they have doubled their earnings while we’ve all had to suffer.”

He slammed the role of Virgin Care as “the same people who plundered the railway” in the sector.

GRENFELL

The spectacle of tube driver Harvey Mitchell stopping his train to pay respect to the victims of the Grenfell Tower tragedy was etched on many delegates minds at AGM. When this was mentioned, delegates gave Mr Mitchell a resounding round of applause.

AGM resolved to affiliate and financially support the Justice4Grenfell campaign, noting that the fire last year was “entirely preventable”.

Oluwarotimi Ajayi, Paddington 1 said that to a friend had moved out of the tower two years ago, the “people in that building are family”.

“On the day of the fire, he had his 13 year-old daughter talking to her 13 year-old friend in that building.

“You cannot imagine the pain that that girl went through on that night,” he said.

Glen Hart, Morden & Oval



Jim McDaid

AGM 2018 Edinburgh



said: "I'm asking everyone to support this but it's not just about money, I want the union to do something active".

Cat Cray said that as the London Transport area political officer she had been "getting involved in the silent marches" held by justice campaigners.

"Let's be clear, this was an entirely preventable incident and it was social murder. There was blood on the hands of our government," she said.

Urging support for the motion, Mick Cash said that the union was already supporting the Justice4Grenfell campaign.

He slammed establishment attempts to apportion guilt to the firefighters who attended the scene, saying: "It reminds me of the Justice for the 96 campaign

where the victims were blamed for that.

"This tragedy will go on for years and years, the impact will go on for decades," he said.

NATIONALISATION

AGM voted to support nationalising Britain's banks with a motion which stated that "democratic public ownership" of banks was "the only way to guarantee proper regulation of the banking and finance sector".

Proposing the motion, Jim McDaid said: "The banks have failed, we saw that during the crash, and they failed miserably.

"If the steel industry fails, there are job losses. If the banks fail, we bail them out."

Peter Woods, TFL 1 said that he thought the motion did not

go "far enough".

"We've seen the banks nationalised and then handed back to the same failed capitalists on the cheap.

"What my branch has a problem with is, would we be bailing them out with compensation?" he said.

Ted Woodley, Birmingham Rail said that the motion was in accordance of the aim set out in the rule book to create a "socialist system of society".

Lynch concurred: "If you don't have democratic control of the creation of wealth, the creation of money, you will not achieve a socialist system of society".

Delegates also heard calls for a new resolve to fight fascism, following the recent

demonstration in London demanding the release of former EDL leader Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, aka Tommy Robinson.

Proposing an emergency motion, Glenroy Watson said: "As a movement we should be contributing to the resistance to rising fascism.

"We might disagree about the size of the demonstration but it was a very heated and supported far-right demonstration.

"This represents a change in the situation and we need to really recognise that."

Jim McDaid said: "These days there doesn't seem to be a lot of fightback - and that's what this motion's calling for".

Patrick Hull, Carlisle City argued: "The young are

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Mick Lynch

interested, the young are motivated – we’ve just got to work hard on getting in contact with them and engaging them.”

Offering support from the top table, Steve Hedley concluded: “The same people who are funding the European far right and the US far right are now taking an interest in Tommy Robinson as a populist frontman,” he said.

Another emergency motion pledged support for international campaigns to pay reparations to African people enslaved by the British Empire. Glenroy Watson said: “Yes we know the horrors and we shouldn’t forget the barbarity of slavery.

“But the fact of the matter is that this was theft of labour”.

Delegates also voted to call



on the Labour party to reinstate Mark Wadsworth, who was expelled following an incident at the launch of the Charabarti report into anti-semitism, to membership.

Oluwarotimi Ajayi, Paddington 1 said that Ruth Smeeth had made a false allegation of anti-semitism against him, which she later withdrew.

Tributes were paid to former women’s committee member and LU Engineering branch activist Val Barzey, with AGM voting to start an “organising campaign aimed at women in engineering and maintenance grades” in her honour.

Christine Willett, South East Essex said that the initiative would aim to “organise in her memory and campaign going



Delegates to youth course at AGM



Supporting striking nurses in New Zealand

forward and “to recruit women, especially in engineering”.

Millie Apedo-Amah, South London Rail said: “She was a personal friend of mine and we frequently socialised, we had a lot in common. Good food and fine wine was one thing”.

Steve Hedley said: “We need to sit down with the women’s advisory committee and the engineering branch, and we don’t just pass this but we get it running on the ground.”

MEMORIAL

AGM also paved the way for seafarers and passengers who lost their lives in the 1987 Herald of Free Enterprise tragedy to be commemorated in a new memorial.

Delegates voted to initiate a memorial in a “suitable location”, possibly in Dover, where the boat was due to dock, because many of the crew were resident there.

The ferry capsized moments after leaving the Belgian port of Zeebrugge in March that year, killing 193 passengers and crew. Water had flooded the decks after the ship’s bow door was left open.

Brian Reynolds, Glasgow Shipping said that it was “crucial” to put a monument in place as a “permanent reminder to the board of that company, that should have been jailed for murder”.

Karl Taylor, Dover Shipping suggested other unions should be approached to “assist with the funding”.

Mike Sargent, Dover District General Grades added: “It was an awful night... it was the most horrendous thing I’ve ever lived

through”.

David King argued that the name The Herald of Free Enterprise captured the disaster was “all about the failures of capitalism”, saying the pursuit of profit had led to the doors being left open.

AGM further resolved that every shipping company with over 500 members should have a full-time convener.

Karl Taylor, Dover Shipping said: “There’s a massive geographical spread of our members.

“We’ve got a massive membership in Dover and we’re doing very well.

“But this isn’t just about Dover, this is about large shipping companies, getting more members, and getting out to the members we already have.

Mike Sargent said: “This can only improve the situation for

seafarers and our SOS 2020 campaign”.

An amendment moved by Ian Boyle, South West and South Wales Shipping on behalf of Southampton Shipping, sought to add a number of conditions, including that the convener be paid “the average wage of RMT members within that company”.

Brian Reynolds said seafarers’ living costs increased “when you come off that vessel” and that convenors should be chosen from among shipping reps. But he said he supported “the spirit” of the motion.

Mick Cash called the amendment “a bit of a curate’s egg”. He asked for “clear certainty from the mover” that the intention was for the convener to be elected by reps and the moving branch obliged. The amendment fell after a vote, but the motion was passed unamended.

Delegates also called for the union to adopt guidelines setting out a process for defending members accused of harassment.

A motion stated that “the union will not blame the victim, argue that the issue does not matter or is just “banter” - but instead will offer an “arguable defence” that might include an offer to attend training but an argument that dismissal is excessive.

Mick Cash argued that due process was necessary in such cases, but that this “doesn’t mean turning the argument against the individual who has made the accusation”.

PARLIAMENT

Ian Mearns, who chairs RMT’s parliamentary group at Westminster, told AGM that Labour’s radical 2017 manifesto could form the foundations of a



Mark Armstrong

AGM 2018 Edinburgh

“ground war” to “save Britain, save our families from the wreckage and the carnage being heaped upon us by the Tory party”.

He told delegates: “The Labour leadership are with you in your disputes, and with you in your campaign for public ownership.”

He also recounted the “sad and shocking news” of the death of Simeon Andrews, who led the support operation for the RMT’s parliamentary group, earlier this year. Mick Cash echoed this tribute, saying that the funeral had been “a wonderful celebration of his life”.

Elaine Smith, the convener of the RMT’s Scottish Parliament group, reported that it now included members from “all different parties, but we are all committed to the principles of rail renationalisation”.

She said that she would “continue to challenge the Scottish Government on public ownership, on the principles of fair work... and on their refusal to take Northlink back into public hands.”

Doug Paulley, of Disabled People Against Cuts (DPAC), told AGM that the de-staffing of Britain’s railways was having a “disproportionate effect on disabled people”.

His campaign group has regularly campaigned alongside striking rail workers as they



Mick Cash with Elaine Smith

protest the imposition of driver-only trains.

“A station is only step free if there’s somebody there to put the ramp down,” he said.

“When things go wrong... that’s when guards are incredibly important to me.”

Mick Cash said of DPAC: “They take direct action and they’ve been complete and utterly supportive of us as a trade union.”

SOLIDARITY

Addressing AGM, RMT president Sean Hoyle looked back over two and half years in his position and condemned the

election of Donald Trump in the US. “We’ve all seen the pictures of kids in cages,” he said. “Then we come to the Syrian crisis and the refugee crisis we created through our policies.

“629 people on a boat turned away by the right wing regime in Italy. What are we trying to do? We have a duty to create a better society regardless of how unpopular some of these issues may be in the workplace,” he said.

AGM unanimously resolved to support demonstrations against Trump and build links with US trade unionists.

But urging delegates to

support the call, RMT assistant general secretary Steve Hedley warned: “Trump is not just an obnoxious individual, he’s representative of what’s happening in the US.

“If any reps are worried about getting into trouble, give me a shout and I’ll come and leaflet your depot,” he said.

With so many members fighting at home, it would be easy to forget struggles abroad – but not at RMT AGM. John Samuelson, International President of RMT’s sister union TWU, leads over 148,000 members across the transport sector in the United States.



President's column

"In Columbus, Ohio we are facing one of the most critical fights which will resonate with RMT members," he said, "and that is the plan to introduce full bus automation by 2022 with the removal of drivers and their replacement with computerised operation.

"We will strike to keep our members on the buses if need be in what is a crucial dispute for global transport workers."

Joe O'Flynn, general secretary of Irish union Siptu, said: "The one campaign we are spending a lot of time on is fighting precarious employment.

"We have to give people confidence in the future. We need to make sure workers are protected against the deregulation that has been promised."

Asle Reim, of Norway's Industri Energi, said: "Our common fight for members working rights, for safe helicopters, is well known over the North Sea".

John Kerr, of the RMTU New Zealand, reported that his union had won "three major disputes", including against driver-only operation in Auckland, over terms and conditions in Wellington and over safety on the waterfront.

"Kiwis don't like confrontation but when they do get in a strap they don't back off," he told the hall.

He said "ministerial intervention" had been "pivotal" in recent successes. While New Zealand's new Labour-led government was "by no means socialist", he argued it was "the first government that has departed from the rhetoric of neoliberalism in the past 30 years in New Zealand".

And French union CGT official David Gobe said: "We have different union practices from RMT, a different history. But we carry the same values: a class and mass trade unionism, internationalism and solidarity." It was a message that spoke for all.



RISE OF THE FAR RIGHT

Some may say that the rise of the far right is not surprising, as we have seen many times in history, when you have an unfair, unequal society and resources are distributed unevenly the culture of blame and scapegoating of entire communities become the norm.

Instead of recognising who the real enemy is within a Capitalist Society and that class struggle together is the only way to fight back, many believe the politics of division and hate that allow the likes of the EDL, SDL, DFLA, UKIP and others to flourish.

We in the trade union movement must make a stand against all forms of inequality and be prepared to challenge racism/fascism whenever it shows its face.

Yes we are an industrial organisation, but we are also a socialist organisation and defending workers in the workplace may well be our bread and butter, but defending all in our communities is our duty.

Recently while many of us were marching with our wonderful Fishbourne Band, at the Durham Miners Gala, Steve Hedley our senior assistant general secretary and a number of other RMT activists were in London, protesting at an Anti-Donald Trump and Anti-Free Tommy Robinson demonstration.

At the end of the demonstration while enjoying a drink outside a pub, they were attacked by fascists who used pint glasses and chairs in the most cowardly of attacks.

Although many were injured that day only one week later Steve and his partner Bridget, our representatives Glen H, Mike S, Kym O and others were all back on a RMT-arranged coach heading for the next anti-fascists demonstration in Cambridge, this speaks volumes about what RMT is about...No Pasaran.

My final AGM as President took place in Edinburgh recently and I especially want to thank all those that helped make the week go so well. Special thanks to the reception committee Graham Buchanan, Alex Hogg, Neil McDonald, Gary Buchanan, Ronnie Coats, Alan Cadden, Davie Brown and Shaun McCruden. Also the regional organiser that helped make it all tick Mick Hogg.

'Privatisation is a neoliberal and imperialist plan. Health can't be privatised because it is a fundamental human right, nor can education, water, electricity and other public services. They can't be surrendered to private capital that denies the people from their rights.' [Hugo Chavez 1954-2013]

In Solidarity, Sean Hoyle

NETWORK RAIL IN SCOTLAND

Around thirty local and area reps from Network Rail Infrastructure in Scotland gathered at the company's training centre in Larbert recently.

RMT regional organiser Gordon Martin led discussions on a wide variety of issues including the stood off arrangements,

collective bargaining, vacancies and upcoming consultations.

Delegates were also addressed by guest speakers Scotrail Alliance managing director Alex Hynes and Dave Scott from the anti-sectarian charity Nil by Mouth.

RMT co-ordinator for Network Rail

Scotland Dane Smith said that the meetings with the area and local reps took place on a regular basis which helped ensure that information was passed from the depots to the area reps and from the area reps back to the depots which helps keep industrial relations on a steady level.

"With the hard work done we can now look forward to engaging with the management along with Area Council colleagues to secure the very best possible for all our maintenance members in Scotland," he said.



EUROPEAN PASSENGER SERVICES
BRANCH
NOMINATES
STEVE SHAW
FOR RMT PRESIDENT

KINGS CROSS BRANCH
NOMINATES
STEVE SHAW
FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

WATFORD BRANCH
NOMINATES
STEVE SHAW
FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

WATERLOO BRANCH
NOMINATES
STEVE SHAW
FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

GREAT NORTHERN RAIL BRANCH
NOMINATES
STEVE SHAW
FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

CARLISLE CITY BRANCH
NOMINATES
STEVE SHAW
FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

MARCH & DISTRICT BRANCH
NOMINATES
STEVE SHAW
FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

LONDON AND ORIENT ENGINEERING
BRANCH
NOMINATES
STEVE SHAW
FOR RMT PRESIDENT

ST PANCRAS BRANCH
NOMINATES
STEVE SHAW
FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

CAMBRIDGE BRANCH
NOMINATES
STEVE SHAW
FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

COLCHESTER AND DISTRICT BRANCH
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STEVE SHAW
FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

EUSTON NO1 BRANCH
NOMINATES
STEVE SHAW
FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

GLASGOW 5 BRANCH
NOMINATES
STEVE SHAW
FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

POOLE & DISTRICT BUS BRANCH
NOMINATES

STEVE SHAW

FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

WISHAW & MOTHERWELL BRANCH
NOMINATES

GORDON MARTIN

FOR REGIONAL ORGANISER, SCOTLAND
(REGION 1)

SOUTH LONDON RAIL
NOMINATING

STEVE SHAW

FOR RMT PRESIDENT

BRIGHTON AND HOVE CITY BRANCH
NOMINATE

MICHELLE RODGERS

FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

WISHAW & MOTHERWELL BRANCH
SUPPORTS

STAN HERSCHEL

FOR RELIEF REGIONAL ORGANISER -
'NORTH'

BIRMINGHAM ENGINEERING
SUPPORTS

STEVE SHAW

FOR RMT PRESIDENT

WIMBLEDON BRANCH
NOMINATE

MICHELLE RODGERS

FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

BRIDGEND LLANTRISANT AND DISTRICT
BRANCH NOMINATES

MARK ARMSTRONG

FOR NEC MEMBER FOR SOUTH WALES
AND WEST OF ENGLAND REGION

CARDIFF NO 7 BRANCH
NOMINATING

STEVE SHAW

FOR RMT PRESIDENT

DOVER DISTRICT GENERAL GRADES
BRANCH NOMINATES

MICHELLE RODGERS

FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

BRIDGEND LLANTRISANT AND DISTRICT
BRANCH
NOMINATES

STEVE SHAW

FOR RMT PRESIDENT

CAMBRIAN BRANCH
NOMINATES

STEVE SHAW

FOR RMT PRESIDENT

MANCHESTER SOUTH BRANCH
NOMINATE

MICHELLE RODGERS

FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

PRESTON NO 1 BRANCH
SUPPORTS

STEVE SHAW

FOR RMT PRESIDENT

PADDINGTON NO 1 BRANCH
NOMINATES

STEVE SHAW

FOR RMT PRESIDENT

NEWCASTLE RAIL & CATERING BRANCH
NOMINATE

MICHELLE RODGERS

FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

EAST SUSSEX COASTWAY BRANCH
NOMINATES

STEVE SHAW

FOR RMT PRESIDENT

BLETCHLEY AND NORTHAMPTON BRANCH
NOMINATES

STEVE SHAW

FOR RMT PRESIDENT

WISHAW & MOTHERWELL BRANCH
SUPPORTS

MICHELLE RODGERS

FOR RMT PRESIDENT

WIRRAL BRANCH
NOMINATES

STEVE SHAW

FOR RMT PRESIDENT

WOLVERTON BRANCH
NOMINATED

STEVE SHAW

FOR
RMT PRESIDENT

PORTSMOUTH BRANCH
NOMINATES

MICHELLE RODGERS

FOR RMT PRESIDENT

THREE BRIDGES BRANCH
SUPPORTS

STEVE SHAW

FOR RMT PRESIDENT

MORDEN & OVAL BRANCH
SUPPORTS

MICHELLE ROGERS

FOR RMT PRESIDENT

Glenroy Watson speaking at AGM

FIGHTING FOR REPARATIONS

Isis Amlak of Global Afrikan Congress uk demands reparations for the enslavement of African people and the associated crimes against humanity

This year's annual Trade Union Congress will feature a fringe meeting on Reparations organised by RMT, the Black and Ethnic Minority Members Advisory Committee (BEMMAC) and Black Solidarity Committee (BSC).

For over ten years RMT have held an annual Reparation now conference on August 23, the international day for the remembrance of the slave trade.

African people have actively fought against enslavement and colonisation since the first Arab and European invasions and kidnappings.

Resisting this forced migration, trafficking, referred to by some as the 'trans-Atlantic slave trade' continued unabated by way of mutiny, uprising, and revolution, most famously

exemplified by the Haitian Revolution that began on August 23 1791. It was this historical event that defeated Napoleon's armies and founded the world's first African Republic outside of Africa.

It was the impetus for the abolition of enslavement. Renowned activist, author, scholar and speaker at the first conference, Professor Raymond Winbush writes 'the reparations movement has been an integral part of the African struggle for redress since Europeans first captured them in 1441'.

The system dehumanised and monetised Africans' and enslavers profited. David Barry Gasper writes 'when Antigua enslaved were executed for crimes, or when they were hunted down and killed as

fugitives, their 'owners' were entitled to compensation from public funds after they had filed claims or petitions to the legislature'.

Evidentially European enslavers always recognised the validity of compensation: reparations, for themselves only. Essentially reparations means repairing damage there are five formal categories restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition.

Victims of international human rights or humanitarian law violations have the right to prompt, sufficient, effective reparation and can be individuals or groups who suffered similar violations.

Contrary to prevalent narratives enslavement was not abolished in 1807 or in 1838, it was simply replaced by bonded enslavement on plantations. In 2013 The Guardian newspaper reported that 'The British government paid out £20 million to compensate some 3,000 families that claimed to have 'owned Africans' for the loss of their 'property' when enslave-ownership was abolished in Britain's colonies in 1833.

This figure represented a staggering 40 per cent of the Treasury's annual spending budget and, in today's terms, calculated as wage values, equates to around £16.5 billion'; Africans received nothing.

Towards the end of the US Civil War General Sherman famously issued a field order authorising the distribution of 40 acres of Southern land to each former enslaved man and the loan of a government mule to work it, '40 acres and a mule': an illusion because Congress never ratified it.

Instead the vicious Jim Crow system was executed. Between 1882 and 1968, African Americans were denied basic human rights in every strata of society, terrorised and lynched.

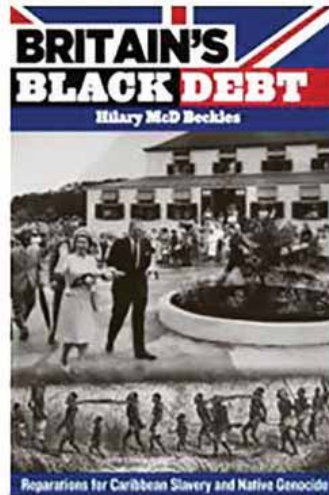
As trade unionists we must recognise that stolen labour is a key element of reparations. Prominent Africans such as Cornelius J. Jones brought a



lawsuit in 1915 demanding \$68 million in compensation for the unpaid labour of enslaved people. The Rte. Hon Marcus Mosiah Garvey, in the 1920s, made reparations central to his Black Nationalist UNIA programme Declaration of the Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World.

Against this history of Africans leading the call for Reparatory Justice. In the 1990s, UK based African activists reinvigorated the movement's momentum. Although Jewish, Japanese and First Nations of Canada made successful reparations claims when it came to the atrocity of the African Holocaust double standards applied.

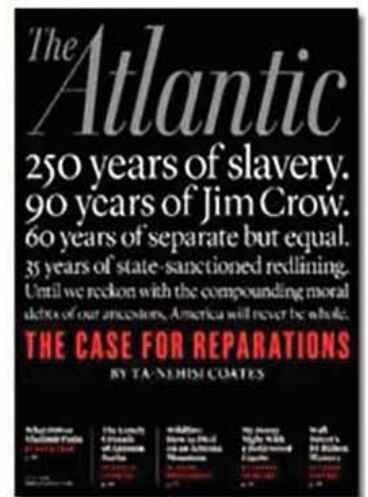
Hypocritically, in those cases there was 'positive silence' whilst African's claims were met with hostility. Following the 1993 Conference on Reparations in Abuja, Nigeria, calling for the establishment of national reparations committees throughout Africa and the African Diaspora, Labour MP Bernie Grant established The African Reparations Movement (ARM). In August 1999, the African World Reparations and Repatriation Truth Commission meeting in Accra, called on Western Europe and the United States to pay \$777 trillion within five years for the destructive impact on the development of Africa by the pillage of at least thirteen million Africans.



In 2002 in Bridgetown Barbados, following the UN World Conference on Racism in South Africa where enslavement and colonialism were declared 'crimes against humanity', the Global Afrikan Congress, an international body, was formed with the express purpose of bringing 'to fruition our collective demand for Reparations, justice and equality'. Currently the UK chapter is the most consistently active national organisation of any established specifically for reparations.

Leading up to the 2007 bicentennial of the "abolition of the slave trade" leading RMT activists who had established structures to enhance the participation of Black workers such as B&EMMAC, BEM and BSC, were concerned that the government were going to celebrate and claim that they "abolished slavery".

Glenroy Watson, reparations activist, Pan Africanist and trade unionist, explained 'Black members within RMT felt that it was crucial to ensure that didn't happen in isolation, union and community organisations mobilised to educate and remind people that Africans ended enslavement through their revolutionary activities, including rebellions and burning plantations'. Eleven years after the first conference the event's continued success is a testimony to the power of grassroots organising; people on the



ground working to make it happen in the face of many adversities.

There have been consistent attempts to derail the conference, Glenroy explains 'It's evident that when we send invitations to international guests, we invite a speaker from the African continent and one from the diaspora, "they" are aware because invitations have to be taken to local embassies for visas. On every occasion, even where there are no visa restrictions, there has been interference and deliberate sabotage. When we invited Mario Joseph from Haiti he was delayed by three days for it to be 'checked' by the same issuing authority before being permitted to enter the UK so he missed the conference; we had to get Jeremy Corbyn involved. It was deliberate. We've had people from Nigeria and Kenya refused visas. When we invited Chinweizu who was over 70 years old they claimed that they had to check his return ticket in case he tried to overstay and look for work'.

Over a decade of consistency has firmly entrenched the annual conference within the wider movement for reparatory Justice not only in the UK but globally. The campaign recognises it is a part of the history of the fight for justice within RMT. Ultimately, reparations is about achieving a just society.



CLAIM TOWARDS YOUR EVERYDAY HEALTHCARE COSTS

As an RMT member, you have the opportunity to join the BHSF health cash plan. By joining, you and your family can claim cash towards your everyday healthcare costs, including dental, optical and therapy treatments, plus much more.

The health cash plan available to you has changed; your brand new Health4All health cash plan has enhanced benefits to help you better manage your healthcare costs. One of the key changes is that you can now claim every year for optical, hearing aids and health screening.

Cover starts from as little as £5.78 per month and premiums are payable through convenient payroll deduction.

*For example, a policyholder with personal Gold cover could claim:

- Up to £150 towards dental bills
- Up to £150 towards optical costs
- Up to £250 towards diagnostic consultations
- Up to £500 towards therapy treatments such as physiotherapy, osteopathy and chiropractic treatment

Policies also include access to a

GP consultation service, connecting you 24/7 to a fully-qualified GP, via a helpline for advice and diagnosis on health matters. Also included is a telephone helpline available 24/7, providing a telephone counselling service on stress, family relationships, substance abuse and debt, along with legal advice and information on financial and health matters.

Any RMT member aged 16 or over, who normally resides in the UK can apply; no medical is required and 90% of eligible claims are paid within two working days of receipt.

You can claim from the start date of your policy with the exception of maternity benefit which is subject to a 10 month qualifying period; and if you have an existing medical condition, you will have to wait two years before you are covered for hospital claims for the same or a related condition. Telephone helplines can be accessed from the start date of your policy.

For more information about the BHSF Health4All health cash plan, or to apply, call 0121 629 1089.■

**based on the personal Gold cover at £18.50 per month.*



LETTERS

DRIVER SUPPORT FOR GUARDS

Dear editor,

I would like to recognise the solidarity shown by SWR guards in the on-going dispute over guaranteeing a second safety critical staff member on every passenger train, and especially to Bournemouth and Weymouth Guards who are involved in an additional dispute regarding the dismissal of two of their colleagues.

While spin doctors may use the terms 'plan', 'normally' and 'guarantee to roster' in their public press releases, front line train crew know that only by 'guaranteeing that every train in

passenger service' has a second safety critical member of staff will all passengers know there is someone to help them in an emergency situation. It is only with that guarantee will passengers know there will be someone to turn to with enquiries during disruption, that vulnerable passengers will know for sure there is someone to turn to for help when they are being harassed and that less mobile passengers will know for sure that they will be able to travel when they want to rather than booking days in advance or worrying if there will be help to get on and off the train at their chosen stop.

It is during these difficult and testing times that the solidarity of Guards, standing shoulder to shoulder on the picket line has come to the fore. It is also a recognition that, for decades, railwaymen and women have stood together and fought to defend jobs, attain favourable pay settlements, rosters and terms and conditions. Guards and drivers today directly benefit from the solidarity of those in whose shoes we now walk, and it is not only right to stand up for passengers, but it is also right to defend good jobs rather than allow a spiralling descent into a culture of split-shifts, reduced sick pay, zero hour

contracts and low pay with few, if any, terms and conditions.

It is with a unity of purpose that guards have had to resort to taking industrial action. It is with solidarity and conviction that they defend overall passenger safety while also defending good jobs for their children, grandchildren and future working generations.

Guards should be proud of the stand they have taken and I, and many other drivers, support them.

Julian Morison, Train Driver
SWR Bournemouth



BRANCH SECRETARIES MEET

RMT branch secretary's conference secretary Jim Philp reports on the 99th annual event

A good weekend was had by all at the 99th branch and regional secretary's conference in Cardiff hosted by Cardiff branch attended by old and new faces.

Conference president Keith Murphy thanked everyone for

their attendance and it was good to see secretaries from all around the country.

RMT education officer Andy Gilchrist delivered a two hour education programme which was well appreciated as well as an update on our unions continuing education activities.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash gave a great speech on the unions performance and the will

and determination of our members at the sharp end. Thompson lawyers gave a report on the work that they do on behalf of members and some very good debates were had.

Next year will be the 100th conference and we are hopeful that the attendance will be even better and we encourage more officers to attend.

It will be in the Lake District

and the conference executive is hard at work putting things in place. It has been asking branches for assistance for a design to encompass our centenary year which hopefully could be used on badges and t-shirts. Looking forward to seeing branch and regional and assistant secretaries in the Lake District next year.

RAISING FUNDS AGAINST DOO

RMT president Sean Hoyle abseils down Spinnaker Tower in Portsmouth

Some time ago I decided that I wanted to do something to kick-start a fund raising initiative, to ensure that our members who have been taking strike action in defence of the travelling public could continue to be supported financially.

As someone that has never liked heights, I didn't think I would end up dangling off the tallest building in my home town and I have to thank my sister Sheena for coming up with that bright idea.

On August 4 my good friend Bob Harper joined me in abseiling 560 foot, down the Spinnaker Tower in Portsmouth. It was a great opportunity to raise some money but also public awareness of our current

disputes regarding driver-only operation.

The fact that train operating companies and the government are working hand in glove, trying to remove the safety critical role of our guards, putting the safety and accessibility of the travelling public at risk is not always well known, so any chance to get that message out there was not missed.

The public appeared to be genuinely interested when we engaged with them about why we were abseiling down the tower and many didn't mind putting their hands in their pockets to show support.

I would like to challenge all branches to organise just one



event to raise as much money as possible in support of all our members that are forced to take action going forward.

As I write this we have £2,590 on the justgiving page and I will leave it open for little

while longer just in case anyone reading this would like to donate. So thank you to all that have given already. Solidarity www.justgiving.com/crowdfundimg/sean-hoyle

Book review

DISAFFECTED MIDDLE-AGED WOMEN

Poems by Janine Booth (Roundhead Publicans)

I have to say I prefer to hear poetry live, spoken word as it is meant to be. I have heard Janine recite her work on many occasions. Always a class act either as a Poet on the Picket line, at Loud Women gigs or at numerous benefit events. I was pleasantly surprised therefore how well her poetry works written down.

This latest volume is her homage to a demographic the establishment would be ill advised to ignore

*"Somewhat like the angry youth
But rather longer in the tooth
We're gobby, feisty, loud, uncouth
We're disaffected middle aged woman"*

Forty four poems imbued with the blossoming of maturity and covering everything from Harvey Weinstein, Grenfell Tower, Tory Glastonbury, climate change, violence against women and the rise of the far right. Most are topical, many are humorous, some rhyme, some don't, but they do have a rhythm and style that is very much

Janine. She writes to entertain, but makes you think at the same time. She can invoke emotions like anger and compassion in equal measure. Some are short. Nine lines in Settling Accounts say all you need to understand the punch line.

"He drinks,
And she pays for it"

Others are lengthy and paint pictures like all good stories. Night Tube which is about her work on London Underground makes you smile as she recounts stories

"from those going home from the lock-in,
to those going out to clock in"

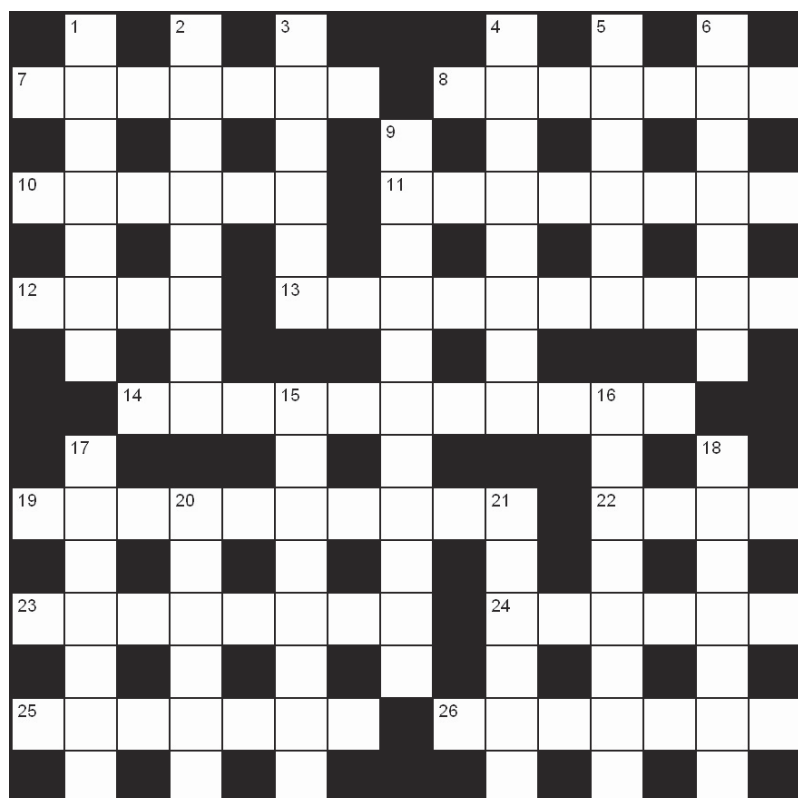
A real slice of reality that is better than any TV documentary.

If you want a respite from the daily grind then dip into this great collection and enjoy. You will be educated and entertained in equal measure.

Bob Oram ■



£50 PRIZE CROSSWORD



Last month's solution...



The winner of last month's prize crossword is P Hobbs, Bideford.

Send entries to Prize Crossword, RMT, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD by Date September 14 with your name and address.

Winner and solution in next issue.



Crossword sponsored by UIA

ACROSS

- 7 Servant (4,3)
- 8 System of government (7)
- 10 Type of mushroom (6)
- 11 Persuasive speech (8)
- 12 Squeal (4)
- 13 Steep slope (10)
- 14 Mutually destructive (11)
- 19 Lose weight (10)
- 22 Tide (4)
- 23 Arcade (8)
- 24 Tradition (3,3)
- 25 Conspiring (7)
- 26 Chopper (7)

DOWN

- 1 Overlay (7)
- 2 As a result (8)
- 3 Form (6)
- 4 High rising (8)
- 5 Distort (6)
- 6 Glowing (7)
- 9 Relating to spiders (11)
- 15 Feel loathing (8)
- 16 Not metal (8)
- 17 Annual manual (7)
- 18 Arched roof (7)
- 20 Wrestling hold (6)
- 21 Make possible (6)



RMT CREDIT UNION LTD.

Finance Department, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

RMT CREDIT UNION APPLICATION FORM — please complete your application along with the attached Direct Debit.

Please use **BLOCK CAPITALS** and **black ink**.

1 PERSONAL DETAILS.

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

2 **Marital Status** married ☐ partner ☐ single ☐ divorced ☐ **Drivers Licence No.**

3 Your Employment.

Employer		RMT Branch	
Job Description			

4 **Mr** ☐ **Mrs** ☐ **Ms** ☐ **Miss** ☐

5 Membership Status

RMT TU Member ☐ Retired RMT TU Member ☐ RMT Family Member ☐

6 **How much do you wish to save £** This is the amount you wish to save by Direct Debit monthly on the 28th ☐ or date you next get paid weekly ☐ if 4 weekly (Fri) ☐ date here.....

7 Normally your payments are made once a month (28th) to RMT Credit Union Ltd.

8 **Next of Kin**

Address

.....
.....

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

Your signature

Date

We are checking new member identification electronically. To do this, we now carry out searches with credit reference agencies who supply us with relevant detail including information from the Electoral Register. The searches will not be used by other lenders to assess your ability to obtain credit.

I agree to my identity being checked electronically ☐

If we cannot verify your identity and address by this method, we will ask you to provide paper documentation instead. Full details of these can be supplied to you by calling 020 7529 8835.



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To: The Manager	Bank/Building Society
Address	
	Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Bank/Building Society account number

Branch Sort Code

Originator's Identification Number

Reference Number

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

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society.

Please pay RMT Credit Union Ltd 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 Credit Union Ltd, 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.

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- 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.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.





Britain's Largest Specialist Transport Union

SAFE RAILWAYS FOR ALL

- ✓ RMT welcomes key breakthrough on Greater Anglia
- ✓ Massive vote in favour of the "Guard Guarantee"
- ✓ Union steps up campaign to **Keep Britain's Guards** and **Keep the Train Safe**



“ If we can reach a negotiated settlement to the guards' dispute on Greater Anglia that has safety, security and access its core – the latest in a series of agreements – then there is no reason why we can't achieve the same across the rail industry if the train operating companies are prepared to get down to business. ”

Mick Cash,
RMT General Secretary

Protecting our members' interests is our priority
Join us today

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