

CWU *The communications union*
South East Central
Annual Report
2011/12



In Confidence for South East Central CWU members

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Pictures on front cover, from top left going clockwise: Gardens on Eastbourne seafront, the Hastings funicular railway, The Pantiles area in Tunbridge Wells and the clock tower in Brighton.

The views expressed in this annual report are personal to the author concerned and may not be the view of the branch. This report is “in confidence” and is meant for CWU South East Central members only.

Branch Secretary Report – Chris Power

Within my Annual Report for 2011, there are several main areas which I feel merit covering. Recruitment and Organisation, Committee meetings, and Regional issues have all had a major impact on this Branch.

Recruitment & Organisation

BT Group membership, which makes up some 85% of the Branch membership has been in decline across the whole Union for some years, due to redundancies and leavers. We finished the year with 869 BT members out of a total of 1012 employed members and 112 retired members. Membership levels are fundamental in dictating how much time off work representatives of the Branch get to conduct work on behalf of members. When considering that other Branches have seen major drops of up to 20% in their membership figures due to closing buildings and members leaving the company it is a credit to this Branch and its activists that we are actually UP in relation to BT membership in comparison to last year. We have run several “Recruitment days” in our main locations of Sevenoaks Work-style, Brighton Kemptown and Brighton Withdean buildings which have been very successful. Thanks to Peter Francis for all his hard work at Sevenoaks, where, whilst there appears to be a hard-core amount of non members, it’s mainly transfers from other Branches that is the key. People from all over London area seem to end up at Sevenoaks and it’s these members who should be in the Branch to attain representation from local reps.



The Brighton sites of Withdean and Kemptown were also visited regularly, in addition to a new strategy in holding events at Stores Hubs in Hastings, Hove and also Tunbridge Wells. We continue to purchase “giveaways” such as pens and key rings to encourage members and prospective members to come and visit us. All recruitment days are advertised via our database of email addresses and it works pretty well. If you don’t receive emails from us as the local Branch, please let us know your email address.

A very quiet year in relation to the Non recognised sector. Personal Telephone Fundraising (PTF), Virgin Media, American Express, INKFISH, have all seem membership levels stagnate, although we have been very successful recruiting Agency staff recruited by BT to cover the Field engineering sector.

Committee Meetings

The Branch Committee (Currently 18 members) still continues to function well, and heated

debates do take place discussing how best to represent our members and formulate Branch policy. I do thank all Committee members and Officers of the Branch for attending, as it's not much fun travelling to Uckfield on a cold wintry night to discuss workplace issues. We had four meetings during 2011 and into double figure attendance at every one. It is really good to see young activist like Flo Williams-Fowler joining the Committee, and she really appears keen to become involved within the Union organisation and that's really good to see as without the younger generation becoming involved the Union is heading into a cul-de-sac. We do suffer from a lot of middle aged white males on the Branch committee, myself being one, and to be more representative of our membership we really need more youth, female, and a more representative ethnicity mix of members to participate more in the Branch. Contact either the Branch Chairperson Dave Kauffman, Dianne Hill as Women's office or Flo as Youth officer if you would like to become more involved in this Branch of the C.W.U. Contact details in this report

PERFORMANCE/ DISCIPLINE ISSUES

General Day to day duties of other senior officers and myself include covering all hearings and appeals of serious offence and gross misconduct discipline cases, together with attend-



ance (Sickness) warnings and also which had been quite high on the Agenda performance issues across the whole of the BT Group businesses, but particularly within Openreach. We had to submit details early in 2011 to Head Office in relation to how many performance based meetings we had attended in the previous 6 months and this totalled 36 for the Branch, a huge amount to be honest. It was due to this that performance is one of the most important issues Head Office is negotiating upon with BT Groups at this time. The company believe they are justified to constantly batter our members in relation to performance. Please keep the Branch informed if you believe you are bullied over your performance

Region

The structure of the Union has been changed over the last year. Theoretically there is no such thing as "Engineering" and "Clerical" parts of the CWU just "Postal" and

“Telecoms”. However, tell that to members that are 30 foot away from the Brighton office, or in the centre of Brighton, or 50 yards away from the Tunbridge Wells office, who are prevented from joining their local Branch. The position is that if you do non-engineering type office work then Meridian Branch is what Head Office dictates those members should be in. Any new members in our geographical area join this Branch whatever role they conduct.

Nationally, the Executive was cut down in size from some 20+ to 16, and also saw the creation of “National Teams”, a little like a National Executive team, which cover all lines of BT Businesses including Openreach (+SMC), BT Retail, BT Operate, Global, Wholesale, Innovate and Design, Fleet, Procurement and Supply Chain, and Group functions, Innovate and were elected by and from the Telecoms Branches. I was really pleased to be elected to the Supply Chain National team and elected by Branches all around the country to do that role. This role now takes up almost half my time on a weekly basis. Steve Taylor was also elected regionally into the BT Estates and Supply Chain Regional SPOC (Single point of Contact in the Region). Congratulations to him, and commiserations to Dave Kauffman who lost the election as Openreach Regional SPOC, with the other 2 Branches in the Region, as usual, clubbing together to keep us out of the majority of the influential posts in the Region.

Chris

Branch committee 2012

If you are interested in joining the South East Central branch committee which meets 4 times a year on a Tuesday evening in a central location (Uckfield Civic centre) to help formulate branch policy and discuss the branch negotiating standpoint on many issues please return this form to either branch office as detailed in this report, or make yourself



known at the AGM, at the Preston Park Hotel, London Road (Nr BT Withdean building) in BRIGHTON on Wednesday 15th February starting 7.30pm. It is unlikely all positions for committee will have been filled.

Committee meetings last 2 hours and we are especially seeking members from ethnic minority backgrounds, Union Youth (Under 30) , women, and gay/lesbian members to join the committee.

Also members from companies other than BT are particularly welcomed as we represent

members in some 9 companies in this area. If you are unable make the meeting please email your details to cwu.sec.br@btinternet.com where upon receipt an officer will contact you to discuss more

Women's Report - Dianne Hill

On average women earn less, own less and are more likely to retire in poverty than men. This Government's approach to cutting the deficit is turning back time on women's equality. So say the Fawcett Society (named after Millicent Fawcett who lead the peaceful 60 year campaign for women's votes) Over 70% of the cuts are hitting women and children, the public service taking the biggest hit with 1 in 5 carer's women, and 25% of all women workers, working in the public sector.

2011 saw the number of women unemployed reach a 25 year high, the same year the number of women in the Cabinet fell to a ten year low. Men MP's outnumber women 4-1, in the House of Lords 5-1, local Councillors 3-1 and no women in the top four of this coalition Government. These people vote on issues relating just to women, is it any wonder we are going backwards when many decisions are made with no female input.

The CWU Women's Conference in Leeds, in November, was again the largest of the Equality Conferences and of course this Governments attack on women was widely condemned. The big push this year is mainly for proportionality and representation, more women and ethnic minorities in more senior roles on Regional committees and in the branches.

Denise Marshall from the Poppy and Eaves project which deals with trafficked women explained how the cuts to this service will destroy the work they do, with no beds, no counselling, young trafficked women with no one to turn to. For the last decade this was mainly funded by the Government this has now stopped. Denise has since given back her MBE that she had received for her work with trafficked women.

As the Women's secretary I represented the CWU South East Women at a joint meeting with the advisory committee followed by the Durham Miners march where over 100,000 marched many in remembrance of what the Tories did to the miner's families and unions. One banner had a list of the men who were out on strike from one colliery with the canteen lady's name on it. We should never forget the role the women played in that strike, with their support and organising. I also took a delegation from the Region to the Labour International Women's Day in London, which was a great success.



The Chain maker's festival (remembering the women who went on strike for a minimum wage in 1910) was not allowed to take place in the Black Country Living museum, Dudley, it was deemed too political, as last year, some of the banners pointed out the cuts against women . The request has again been rejected for this year.

We recently held a women's event at CWU HQ where we had various speaker one of

which was from the Southall Black Sisters which was setup in 1979 to help meet the needs of black women. She explained how this rolling back of the state is having a devastating effect on all women, with the removal of legal aid, half the refugee centres now closed and the growing Sharia Law that works against women. There should be one law for all but the Government seem to be ignoring what is happening.

If you would like to know more please contact Dianne Hill cwuse.women@btinternet.com
01892 702809

Di

Youth Report - Flo Williams-Fowler

This year I had taken on the role as youth officer. I attended a week skills one course aimed at the youth. We were taught about trade unions today, employer responsibilities,

disciplinary procedure and the tools we need to become effective in the workplace. Here, I also got the chance to meet other youth officers from around the country from different work sectors.

2011 was the 10th anniversary of the national youth education event. It had many guest speakers from Andy Kerr to Callum Monro of the Labour NEC youth. There was also workshops set up for discussions on issues such as the robin hood tax, Crisis (a charity for young single homeless people) and the coalition of resistance. It was a great chance to engage with other like minded people and build up confidence for debates and public speaking.



The youth conference was held in Birmingham on the 14th of January 2012. The South East region's motion was passed through successfully. It instructed the Youth Advisory Committee to identify a summer event such as the Tolpudde Martyrs or Chain-makers festival and mobilise the maximum CWU support for it. The labour MP Tom Watson and Billy Hayes were invited as guest speakers and we were given our chance to question them. We discussed and debated on issues such as the government attack on employment rights, how to encourage more woman activists, the quality of BT Apprenticeships and how to promote the Palestinian cause.

Flo

Assistant Secretary East - Steve Taylor

The last year has been eventful to say the least with me meeting many of you for the wrong reasons, those being disciplines. It seems odd to think that the company I joined in 1987 has changed so radically with technological advances and style of management. The management style seems to vary between lines of business, except when it comes to attendance! How many times have we sat opposite management and argued that the punishment is too severe.

However, CWU HQ took up the challenge and got BT to agree that, perhaps, the Bradford factor being set at 80 was a bit draconian and moved it 100. In the agreement it also stated that managers would use discretion in deciding cases, we have to wait to see if that part comes true after all that is what took most time of last years conference!



In the last month CWU have updated their database in which I was one of the people to beta test it, hence some of you got an

email from me asking you to confirm your or your death beneficiaries address. If you have any changes to make please either advise the branch or log on to the CWU website on www.cwu.org and log onto members details. If you haven't already registered its very easy to do it, you just need your membership number which can be found on your union card.

Tinnitus and/or loss of hearing



Over the last year the CWU solicitors have made many successful claims for loss of hearing or even tinnitus which has been caused by the use of BT oscillators and amplifiers.

If you have used the green and/or yellow and/or blue tone sets and now suffer from tinnitus or are hard of hearing you may well be entitled to claim compensation.

If a Group Litigation Order is imposed there would be a cut off date for registering new claims. CWU is therefore encouraging any members who are potentially affected to register a claim via the freephone CWU helpline: **0800 8046674** lines open Monday to Friday 8am - 6pm. One of our solicitors will contact you within 48 hours.

It is important that you register a claim today so that we can ensure that your claim is dealt with now and within any time limits that may be set by the Court.

Steve

Chairperson's Report - Dave Kauffman

I would like to offer you all a 'Happy New Year' on behalf of the Branch as we march on into 2012 and to thank all those in the Branch for their support during 2011. 2011 was a year of change for the CWU it was at Conference this year we saw debate over the change and it is now Policy that we are one constituency no longer Clerical and Engineering we are one CWU.



2011 was a difficult year, like so many have been in recent times, in BT and other Business's the Economy has not been as progressive as the country thought, yet BT is one of the companies that saw a growth in parts of the business. This growth has put a strain on relations between BT and the CWU that will bleed into 2012, the strain is around resource with BT seeking to flat-line resource and the CWU wanting full time jobs created either for Apprentices or full time BT contracts.

In 2009, we saw BT struggling with the recession and this led to the Service Delivery Transformation (SDT) agreement in Openreach that has since led to similar agreements in other lines of Business in BT. On the issue of Resourcing the CWU feels parts of BT, especially Openreach, have been less than genuine in its approach to the SDT agreement which set out principles on Resourcing and the use of Direct Labour as the preferred work force option.

An agreement was struck in 2011 between the CWU and BT, which was to have seen a number of apprentices bought into the company as well as some mobile work force engineers and some Agency conversion to full time BT contracts (creating up to 1000 Full time jobs). Most of the agreement has not been fulfilled and the CWU are still pressing the Company for a better Resourcing approach going into 2012. This at the same time we are seeing contractors being bought in which is muddying the waters of the Performance process as simple installation tasks are being filtered out of the system to fill the Contractors work bucket.

The CWU, nationally, have been in negotiation On Sick Attendance and Performance issues. It is understood from the communications that have come out that the Attendance piece of work is completed around sick absence. The Performance negotiations are ongoing and it is my opinion that there is a long way to go yet. I would ask people to let the Branch or the CWU nationally know the areas where BT is still falling down in its handling of performance management and the possible bullying of Staff.

On a more Local issue we had attendance discussions in Network Investment across the whole area, from East Anglia to Portsmouth, South London to Dover, which have now come to an end. Most people got there first choice preference with just one area creating a sticking point in the process and those engineers are on a TRIAL to ascertain if there geographical location was a factor in the resource needed. Once the trail pattern has been completed an evaluation will be done. The main issue though with all these agreements is how local managers interpret the agreements.

2012 is upon us and we know that some may be leaving BT or at least taking their pension

early as the Pension Easement period comes to an end in March. Don't forget if you do decide to leave BT you can remain part of the CWU by becoming a portability or retired member.

General Meetings

Branch meetings have been held this year across the patch and thanks to all those that came along. These meetings are for you, the members, to come along and have your say. General meeting may only be local to you once a year, so endeavour to give up that evening and come along and bring a couple of work mates with you, join in the debate and have a drink on the branch afterwards. Don't worry if you have not been before, the meeting lasts a maximum of 2 hours and we normally a small buffet.



Bullying and harassment at work, is it happening to you?

For the past few years the CWU have been putting pressure on BT over its management style and although BT agree with some of the arguments put forward, have things really changed? Most people who feel bullied at work, do so due to Performance management. BT has processes for performance management and its treatment of staff and on the whole Senior Management are happy that this is interpreted correctly lower management all is well and people are being treated fairly. But are they?

Management are not dealing with things fairly, in my understanding, when dealing with individuals on performance plans and in some cases hounding, bullying or harassing the individuals until they crack under the pressure and go sick with a stress related illness, perhaps leading to depression.

BT has a policy to deal with Bullying and Harassment at work which can be found on the BT Intranet and we have no problem with the policy. The trouble is, in many cases, people who suffer from bullying and harassment, work on in silence or they go sick with work related stress but do not book this correctly. If you go sick with a work induced stress illness, through bullying or harassment, then I would suggest the individual report this to the accident/incident reporting group,

IF you go sick with stress, caused by Bullying at work, it should be reported as an Accident or incident at work. You should state, when reporting the incident, that you are going sick due to being bullied and you want this logged as a bullying case. If it is your own manager that has caused the bullying you should inform the reporting desk of this, as part of the Sick absence procedure is for your manager to contact you while you are off. If you are off, because you feel bullied by management, then this manager visit/call may prolong your illness more than necessary. Inform your branch.

Dave

Safety Co-ordinators Report - George Hannah



This is my first shot at writing the safety co-ord's report, so please forgive me if I ramble on or go off the point. We have had thirty three reported accidents in our branch area this year which, in my view, is thirty three too many. They range from slips, trips and falls to manual handling incidents. Perhaps the strangest accident this year involved a young man crashing into one of our member's vans on a scooter (not a motor scooter) while he was drunk.

More recently the issue of MEWP buckets coming adrift from the boom started a flurry of activity with many of the Number 5 hoists being called in to be checked. As far as I am aware only one of the MEWPs in our branch area was found to be faulty although one operator had a narrow escape. He decided to clean off the area of the boom and dis-

covered a substantial crack in the boom.

Safety is quite often seen in a poor light as some people see safety reps as getting in the way of doing the job or putting up barriers. Part of the problem it seems is that often "elf and safety" is quoted, when in fact there is no rule, regulation or law banning an activity. One case, which has passed into urban legend, is children having to wear safety glasses when playing conkers.



The HSE appeal to reason stating that if a person does a suitable risk assessment on whatever activity they are undertaking and manage any risks that emerge then all should be ok; they certainly don't want everyone to be wrapped in bubble wrap all the time they are at work. They have been running a campaign since 2007 trying to dispel some of the more prevalent myths.

The coalition government has stated that it wants to try and get rid of some of the more ludicrous safety rules to ease the burden of red tape on business, they commissioned the Lofstedt review which was to look at all H&S law and regulation and trying to move more towards self regulation. In the introduction to his review Professor Lofstedt stated that he had "concluded that, in general, there is no case for radically altering health and safety regulation..." He also stated that "there is a view across the board that regulatory requirements are broadly right".

Although the government have accepted the report they still want to push ahead changes to health & safety law which are worrying such as reducing health & safety requirements for

apprentices. Add into this the government's changes to legal aid which could see an end to "no win no fee", then workers and their families are in danger of being left facing huge bills if they are injured at work and those responsible not being taken to task for their safety crimes. In view of what we are, possibly, facing we are being encouraged to take part in Workers Memorial Day (28 April) day of action.

The coming year will, undoubtedly, bring its own challenges with the continuing economic gloom. As ever there will be issues that need resolving at exchanges but it will be interesting to see what developments we have in regard to road works guarding as there are new regulations due to come in later in 2012.

George

Equality Report - Di Hill

Our National CWU Equality Office has been kept busy this year. They have produced an equality tool kit document, equality proofing update amongst other publications. The incorporation of the DDA into the Equality Act 2010 (coming into force April 2011) giving protection to more people, along with many publications can be found on the National CWU website.

The CWU harassment procedure is also under review looking at how the information can be better used.

The Union still has separate equality Conferences which are all now at the end of the year. I attended the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Conference in Birmingham in November.

Linda Roy (National Equality Officer) spoke of a campaign where they had approached many football clubs regarding homophobic issues but only Bradford City were prepared to get involved. Stephen Fry is amongst those who have signed the Sports Charter to kick homophobia out of sport. Many fans including Brighton and Hove have complained about homophobia in their grounds. Peter Purton from the TUC spoke on equality issues, on the positive side we still have a Government Equality Office, on the negative side the economic situation is chronic giving rise to far right groups, the absence of monitoring in the public sector is not helping equality.



The disability Conference had motions around the devastating effects of the cuts on disabled people, 30% of who live below the poverty line, creating closures of care homes for the elderly, disabled and special needs. Many of the changes are causing confusion!

May 11th saw a demo opposing the welfare reform bill with an estimated 12,000 mainly disabled people taking part. Many Remploy factories have closed as the Government stops

funding; stating that disabled people should be in mainstream labour work not sheltered.

May 17th is International day against Homophobia & Transphobia (IDAHO). The LGBT advisory committee, which made this one of their priorities over the last few years unveiled a memorial in the garden of the CWU Alvescot Education centre.

London will host World Pride this year with the main parade July 7th
Brighton Pride main event September 1st (Preston Park).
The CWU will be in attendance at both events with CWU banners.

If you would like to know more or become involved with LGBT, Disability or the Black workers issues please contact Dianne Hill on 07747193133 or email
dianne.hill1@btinternet.com or cwu.sec.tw@btinternet.com

Di

Financial Secretary Report - Steve Taylor



Another year over and the branch accounts have been filed with head office but, at the time of writing this report, the accounts have yet to be audited. The audit will be done by the time of the AGM and I am sure that Kevin Lench the senior auditor will either give a written report or if he is able to attend, a verbal one. A special thanks goes to Nick King who stepped in at the last minute to become our junior auditor as the vacancy was never filled at the last AGM.

Last year, for the first time, we budgeted £3,000 for the year to spend on recruitment under the heading of “Building Tomorrow Together”. With this money we have bought two pop up banners, mugs, pens, bottle openers and tyre pressure gauges. This expense has reaped the dividends our membership although seemingly stagnant, is doing much better than neighbouring branches.

With another £3,000 being given to the Union Learning Education centre in Withdean and £1,000 donation to HQ Welfare fund, the finance are in surprisingly good shape. A full account of the branch bank accounts will be given at the AGM and questions can be asked by members.

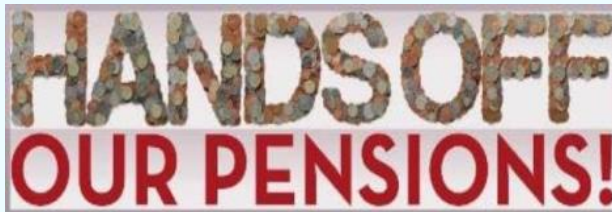


Retired Members Secretary—Dave Lomakin

This year has gone by so quickly. The challenges now facing early release and retirement packages being offered to members have caused concerns and worries which for some colleague's we have been able to alleviate that lifestyle change from BT into the outside world.

Last year the annual "Old Boys Reunion" was held at the beginning of October, this years venue was Hastings Civil Service Club. An enjoyable evening which was very well attended, thanks to Dennis Noble for his help and assistance in running the event. Organising and running these events are not without headaches and I will always welcome help, new ideas and different venues that would suite the occasion.

I also serve on the CWU South East Region Retired Members Council on which we seek to secure and advance pay, pensions, benefits and conditions for retired colleague's . I have attended rallies in London and Hastings. Represented the CWU outside Parliament and have attended meetings with serving ministers who had to accept complaints with benefit reductions and pension liabilities. Our BT pensions face reduced growth caused by the ceasing of increase rates based on Retail Price Index and going to the lower Consumer Price Index rates. There are some pension agreements from BT that still operate with RPI and it is not always foreseeable that CPI will be lower than the current RPI predictions, time and economic conditions will dictate.



If you ever watch News at 10, I have made 2 brief appearances with CWU on the program. The first in conversation with Alistair Darling and the second at a rally in Hastings.

ITV have made 2 es with CWU

In January, I was a delegate member at the CWU Retired Members Conference held in Birmingham and on behalf our branch I had my proposition concerning the continuation of the Death Benefit for CWU members accepted for conference. Unfortunately conference voted against the proposition.

Finally remember that , to take advantage of all CWU BENEFITS you have to make sure you continue membership when release or retirement dates are agreed. Also this is a time to review the Death Benefit nomination form.

Keep in touch with your Union Office .

Dave

Union Learning Co-ordinator - Steve Taylor



Having been elected to the role as union learning co-ordinator, last year, at the second time of trying I managed to get some time to do the role and got trained up in May. Since that time things have happened at break neck speed and has bought me into contact with Ian Livingstone and senior HR people.

After locating the education centre in Withdean Telephone Exchange I found that all the PC's in the room were old and antiquated, the youngest was running windows 98 and some of them refused to even start. After asking BT to remove and recycle the PC's I set about revamping the room. In September the branch was good enough to allow £3,000 to go towards making the education room viable and to buy some new

laptops. This was followed up by a successful application from the Union Learn Sustainability Fund which matched the branches £3,000.

In December, the Chairman and I purchased ten laptops which have now arrived and I am currently loading them with Microsoft Office Pro. The General Manager of Volume, Luke Corkhill, has managed to get wireless internet in the education room for us so we are nearly ready to launch our revamped education room.



So I guess some of you are saying, "well that's no use to me, I live nowhere near Brighton so I cannot use the facility". Well I have thought of that too. As we want to be all encompassing I intend on visiting Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells and Hastings with a smaller scaled education facility, using the mobile data network. If these are successful I would hope to extend to other sites of Eastbourne and Burgess Hill.

I will be opening the education centre initially as a themed cyber café, running with the themes of Microsoft Excel, Social Media, Family History, Digital Photography & PC Skills. I have teamed up with the BBC First Click team and I am preparing to run a course, in the evenings around spring, for our retired members who have yet to get online or want to know a bit more about PC's. If you think you might be interested in this please drop me a line in the Tunbridge Wells office.

If you have any thoughts on what you would like to see us run as an informal course please log onto <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HBYNXWL> and complete the survey.

If you are thinking of doing any further education whether through adult education, open university or even some informal learning, such as brick laying or gardening, contact me as we sometimes get discounted courses which we can pass on to you.

What does a union learning representative do?

ULRs help to give people the skills and knowledge to improve their lives at work and beyond. ULRs have been key in building participation in lifelong learning. As well as helping individual members, ULRs have had a positive effect upon workplaces and organisations themselves.

Currently we have six trained ULRs, those being, Chris Power, Di Hill, George Hannah, Nick Smith, Steve Deeley and myself. As part of our branch education strategy, agreed by the committee, we need to have more ULR's particularly in the Hastings, Sevenoaks, Uckfield and Burgess Hill area. Please contact me if you would be interested in this.

You can now follow the progress of the Union Learning Centre and courses we will run on Facebook and Twitter by looking us up:-

Cwusec Learning

@CWUSECLearning



Themed Cyber Café courses starting this year



Digital Photography



Microsoft Excel



Family History



BBC First Click (Beginners)

Twit-



ter - Social Network

Social Net-



work

Skype -

Facebook - Social Network



Steve

Political Report—Di Hill

The last year has seen marches up and down the Country the largest being the mass demonstration on the 26th of March in London, over 1,000 CWU members marched many from the South East. May Day London is expecting a big turnout this year with the fight against cuts and job losses and for the freedom of trade unions to fight for their member's rights.

We are seeing new trades councils being set up all over the Country Hastings, Brighton, Eastbourne, Lewes and Worthing are all now organising events. I attended the 30th November March in Hastings in support of public pensions. The turn out around the Country (two million public sector workers on strike) was the biggest strike in our history. In October, Lewes Trades Council held a festival to defend services and defeat racism, ending at the Lewes Arms with CWU General Secretary Billy Hayes speaking the event was a huge success.



As a member of the SERTUC executive I was one of three delegates elected to represent SERTUC (which represents over 2million trade unionists) at the Inter-Regional TUC- Triennial General Assembly in Belgium in November. There were Trade Union organizations from France and Belgium, an interesting event with shared problems thank goodness for headphones...my French is a bit rusty!

The Health Bill if passed will be disastrous for us, 98% of the Medical Practitioners are opposed to it, the Royal College of Nurses are opposed and the e-petition to drop the bill collected 35,000 signatures within a couple of weeks. It was publicly supported by Jamie Oliver and Rio Ferdinand. American style health service, the NHS is not safe in Tory hands, never has been! Election of Police Commissioners has been put back 6 months to November 2012 politicising the police, very American and very wrong say the Police Federation! 20% cuts to frontline police services more riots!!!!

Unemployment is rising at 1,300 a day and the total unemployed is the highest since 1994. Change for the sake of change and cut because they think they can is no way to run a Country. Keep this up and it'll be back to the workhouses!!!

Families face the biggest squeeze in living standards since the 1930's; Tory minister Greg Barker (Bexhill & Battle) said proudly "we are making cuts that Margaret Thatcher could only have dreamt of".

I was re-elected to the SE Regional Labour Board to represent trade union members in our Region. I was also elected to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council in May the only Labour Councillor but hopefully we'll have a few more this May.

One trillion pounds deficit and going up.! What are the cuts about then? Sounds like Tory ideology propped up by the Liberal Democrats to me. It's like being back in the days of Thatcher only worse even Big Ben's on the move.

I was re-elected to the SE Regional Labour Board to represent trade union members in our

Region. I was also elected to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council in May the only Labour Councillor but hopefully we'll have a few more this May. **Use your vote May 3.**

For more information please contact Dianne.hill1@btinternet.com 07747193133

General Meeting Dates for 2012/13

Members of the South East Central branch are advised that the following meetings are open to all members :

General Meeting	May 10th 2012	Tunbridge Wells
General Meeting	September 5th 2012	(Sevenoaks or Eastbourne)
General Meeting	November 28th 2012	Brighton
AGM	February 19th 2013	Tunbridge Wells

Meeting venues will be advised closer to the time.

SPECIAL Meetings may be called to address urgent issues
Please also consult the Branch website on www.cwusec.org.uk

ALL MEETINGS COMMENCE 7.30 AND LAST 2 HOURS

Obituary List

Every year we sadly compile the list of members who have died during the year and this year unfortunately is no exception. Although not everything, the Death Benefits were paid to the relatives and we hope that it eased their burden during this sad period.

Peter Janks

Stuart Miles

Paul Hiatt

Dave Kemp

David Middleton

Richard Benbow - a former branch secretary and
"Gold Badge" holder.

South East Central Current Points of Contact



Branch Secretary :

Chris Power
01273 565771
07850 840581

cwu.sec.br@btinternet.com

Branch Chairperson : David Kauffman
01892 522948
07850 815644
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Financial Secretary:
(Assist Sec West & ULR) Steve Taylor
07918 147211
cwu.sec.finsec@btinternet.com

Branch Safety Co-Ord: George Hannah
07802 231134
sec.safety1@btinternet.com

Branch Safety East: Nick Smith
07729413811
sec.safety2@btinternet.com

Women's Officer:
(Political & Equality) Di Hill
07747193133
cwu.sec.tw@btinternet.com

Branch Assist Sec West Peter Francis
via cwu.sec.br@btinternet.com

Youth Officer: Flo William-Fowler
via cwu.sec.br@btinternet.com

Retired Members Sec Dave Lomakin
via cwu.sec.br@btinternet.com

For up to date information please use the branch website at

www.cwusec.org.uk

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01273 565771

Tunbridge Wells
T Wells Tel Exch
Office 305
17 St Johns Road
Tunbridge Wells
TN4 9TN
01892 522948

South East Central Branch

Annual General Meeting

And election of officers

Wednesday 15th February 2012 at 19:30

In the Preston Park Hotel, Brighton BN1 6UU



There will be a buffet and a drink on the Branch at the meeting for all members who attend. If anyone requires transportation, can they please contact either of the Branch offices.