



## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY BRANCH NEWSLETTER March 2011

### Pay and Conditions

The pay rise of 0.4%, backdated to 1 August 2010, will be included in this month's pay packet. Don't spend it all at once!

### UK inflation rises to 4.4% in February

The UK *Consumer Prices Index* (CPI) annual rate of inflation has risen to 4.4%, up from 4% in January, driven by higher food, fuel and clothing costs. It is the highest level for more than two years.

The *Retail Prices Index* (RPI) inflation, which includes mortgage interest payments, rose to 5.5% from 5.1% in January, the highest rate for 20 years.

The CPI measure has now been one percentage point or more above the 2% target for 15 months and is the highest since October 2008. This puts pressure on the Bank of England to raise interest rates to curb accelerating inflation. *Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-12815228>*

*Thisismoney* website says the inflation figures underline just how painful the austerity drive will be for families already struggling to deal with rapidly rising prices. The Institute for Fiscal Studies said the average British household has seen its real-terms income fall by £365 in the worst three-year squeeze since the early 1980s. *Source: [http://www.thisismoney.co.uk/news/article.html?in\\_article\\_id=526297&in\\_page\\_id=2&ito=1565](http://www.thisismoney.co.uk/news/article.html?in_article_id=526297&in_page_id=2&ito=1565)*

### Pensions

At the Branch meeting of 7 March there was a discussion concerning ancillary benefits. The Special Joint Negotiating Committee met twice in January and will meet again on 21 March to continue discussions about proposed changes to the CPS scheme

An outline of these discussions is given in the Minutes of the University and Assistants Joint Board (UAJB) meeting of 8 February 2011 available at: <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/cam-only/committee/uajb/minutes/>.

Before any proposed changes can go forward they must first be approved by various University committees. They then must be put before the membership for consultation, a period of not less than 60 days.

### Over 5 million staff do unpaid overtime

A record 5.26 million people worked unpaid overtime last year, an average of more than seven hours per week without pay, according to a new study. The TUC said workers were missing out on almost £5,500 a year, worth £29bn to the economy. One in five employees regularly put in extra unpaid hours, with public sector workers most likely to work unpaid overtime. The number of workers doing unpaid overtime was the highest since records began in 1992. *Source: Independent 25 February 2011*

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## An alternative vision to the government cuts

An Open Meeting was held on Wednesday 16 March at the Babbage Lecture theatre. It was organised by the Cambridge Unite branch and speakers included a local Cambridgeshire County Councillor, and representatives from each of the major unions representing staff and students at Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin Universities.

### *Problems with government plans that will affect us:*

\*there are no viable plans to stimulate growth for the bulk of the British public. Cuts in public services will increase unemployment and shrink the wealth and services of large numbers of people. Unemployment is already over 2.5 million, the highest figure in 17 years.

\*punishing pension plans for public sector workers, as detailed in the Hutton Report

\*already Cambridgeshire is seeing cuts to buses, libraries and vulnerable adult services.

*Solutions:* A "Robin Hood tax" - a tiny tax on the financial sector could generate £20 billion annually. That's enough to protect schools, hospitals and stop massive cuts across the public sector.

*What can you do?* It's easy to feel the situation is beyond our control, but u-turns happen: the sale of publically owned forestry land for example; so...google "Robin Hood tax", read [falseeconomy.org.uk](http://falseeconomy.org.uk), join the TUC "allpain no gain" campaign and join the march for the alternative on Saturday 26 March.

## Oxbridge academics 'alarmed' over funding

Hundreds of Oxford and Cambridge academics have expressed alarm over university funding plans in a letter to Universities Minister David Willetts. They say universities are being asked to "fly blind" as they move to market-based fees without knowing the full details of the changes. A White Paper setting out the plans expected in March, has been delayed.

Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-12620234>

## Universities 'at risk'

More universities in England could be put at risk of bankruptcy as a result of cuts and changes to funding, warns the National Audit Office (NAO). Their report says while some universities will benefit from the changes others will have less money, and the public might need to be told more about those universities at risk.

The NAO report says while the sector has seen "strong growth in its income" in recent years, "the new funding framework, coupled with the squeeze in public funding, is likely to increase the level of risk within the sector. While there are a number of financially strong institutions, there is wide variation in institutions' financial performance."

Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-12636185>

## England's universities face funding cuts of 12%

Universities in England are facing cuts of 12% - before funding changes linked to student fees come in, according to figures from their funding body. Teaching and research funding is falling on average by 4%, while capital spending is more than halved (58%). Universities which focus on research do best, while newer ones which do more teaching fare worse. Some special funding programmes are ending, and the end of the one-year University Modernisation Fund, brings the total to a 12.6% cut.

HEFCE 's chief executive Sir Alan Langlands said it was a "challenging settlement" for universities and that the grant had been distributed in a way designed to try to ensure a "smooth transition" to the new funding system being brought in in 2012. That is when students in England, once they graduate, will have to pay tuition fees of between £6,000 and £9,000 a year. Then, the government wants funds from the increased fees largely to replace direct government funding of courses.

Cambridge is one of the 'Top 10' winners with only a -0.6% change in cash terms while Oxford does even better (+1.4%). Biggest loser is Bishop Grosseteste University College, Lincoln at -13.4% followed by City University (-8.4%) and the Royal College of Music (-7.9%)

Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-12762556>

International Women's Day  
8 March 2011

## Women's pay

It is 40 years since the Equal Pay Act came into force yet men still earn more than women in nearly 90% of job categories, according to analysis by the *Guardian* newspaper.

On 8 March, when International Women's Day marked its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, men took home higher pay than women in 370 out of the UK's 426 job classifications, while women earn more in only 53 categories from data supplied by the Office for National Statistics). Equal pay prevails in only 3 job categories.

The average man working full time had a median salary of £28,091 in 2010, 19.9% more than his female counterpart. The gap falls to 10.2% when overtime, which typically pays higher rates and is largely carried out by men, is eliminated.

The pay gap has narrowed considerably in the past decade from 16.3% (including overtime) in 2000 to 10.2% last year in hourly full-time wages. But the gap continues to attract near universal condemnation.

Source: *Guardian* 8 March 2011

## UK Unemployment rises again

UK unemployment increased by 27,000 in the three months to 31 January to 2.53 million, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The increase took the unemployment rate to 8%, the ONS said, with youth unemployment also at a record: for those aged between 18 and 24, the rate is 18.3%.

Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-12757675>

## Graduates 'could pay back double'

Some graduates could end up paying back double their original student loans under the new fees system in England, figures calculated for the BBC suggest. The figures, by leading accountants, show that a student borrowing £39,000 for a three-year course could pay back up to £83,000 in total, in cash terms. Under the regime, due to begin in 2012, graduates will pay back 9% of earnings above £21,000 for up to 30 years. The universities minister said the new system was fairer than the old one.

The fees plans apply only in England. In Northern Ireland, a report commissioned by the Department of Employment and Learning (DEL) has recommended that fees should rise to a maximum of £5,750. In Wales, students are protected from the increases, with the Welsh Assembly Government subsidising the cost of higher fees. In Scotland, students do not pay tuition fees.

Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-12767850>

## Cambridge University Press

The University Press have received a revised pay offer of 2.25%.

### Training course: Change at work 11-15 July 2011, Eastbourne

5-day Unite Education course with travel costs, accommodation and meal costs provided. Priority to new or inexperienced reps and those who have not been on a national union training course before. Reps needing a refresher course also considered

If you would like to attend but feel there may be a problem with getting paid release please indicate this on the application form so the matter can be taken up locally. Applications on a 'first come' basis. Applicants must commit to attending all 5 days. Please contact Will Smith if you would like to attend. Applications by Monday 9 May 2011 please

### Act now to beat price rises in April

**Visit the dentist:** English NHS dental charges rise by c. 3%. Welsh charges are frozen at 2006 prices while Scotland and NI still charge for individual treatments.

**12% stamps rise:** on 4 April, 1st-class stamps jump 5p to 46p and 2nd-class 4p to 36p. Stock up on any labelled 1st or 2nd now and they'll stay valid.

**Prescription charges UP 20p in England** from m £7.20 to £7.40; regulars can beat this with prepayment certificates.

**Water bills rise 4.6%** in England & Wales. If you've MORE bedrooms in your house than people, then consider a meter

**Housing benefit slashed** in April: a million people face an average of £600/pa cuts.

**Give to charity asap:** tick Gift Aid on donations means charities can reclaim tax, so if a basic taxpayer gives £1, they get £1.28 - that's actually more than the tax we pay as the government chips in an extra 3p per £1 donated but this extra disappears 5 April. *Source: Martin's Money Tips*

### 2011 census

\* Census day is Sunday 27 March 2011

\* The England census has 14 household questions and 40 personal questions (not all have to be answered) \* The census can be filled in online

### May Day bank holiday plans unveiled

Plans to scrap the May Day Bank holiday to alternative dates have been outlined. Under the proposals, the holiday would be moved to St George's Day in England, St David's Day in Wales, or a Trafalgar Day in October. Ministers said the move would lengthen the tourist season but trade unions said it would disrupt firms and staff. *Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-12640636>*

## Political levy

Forms for those who wish to opt out of the political levy, are now available on the website

## Blood Money

Help stop the privatisation of the National Blood Service: add your name now to the petition below. Medical professionals, patients and blood donors are uniting against these devastating plans. One nurse said "I have witnessed the life changing power of blood donation and cared for patients whose lives would be challenged, reduced, or ended, without it ...A true gift, Life is not for the selling." Sign the Unite petition to Cameron at:

<http://action.unitetheunion.com/1BloodMoney>

## Green news

Tidal power for whiskey distilleries on Islay accoring to a report in the *Independent* of 18 March 2011 - I'll drink to that!

## Marching against the cuts

The people of Saxmundham, Suffolk, or some of them, are preparing to join the march in London on Saturday 26 March.

Last month around 100 people from the town turned out to protest against the possible closure of their library. Suffolk CC has 44 libraries divided into 15 'county' libraries with the rest, including Saxmundham's, being designated 'community' libraries. The community libraries are up for the grabs under the council's outsourcing policy and run the risk of closure from 2012.

And that's why they're planning to take their protest against the cuts to London.

## Cambridgeshire libraries

Petition to save Cambridgeshire's libraries at:  
<http://www.gopetition.com/petition/43867.html>

### Diary Dates

#### Saturday 26 March

#### TUC National Day of Action

Assemble 11.00 am Victoria Embankment for march and rally in Hyde Park

See: [www.tuc.org.uk/march](http://www.tuc.org.uk/march)

Join the campaign at: [www.falseeconomy.org.uk](http://www.falseeconomy.org.uk)

*YThe Cambridge Unite Branch is providing a free bus for anyone who would like to attend the rally: please contact Will Smith*

**National Officer for Education Sector:**  
Mike Robinson

**London & Eastern Regional**

**Regional Officer:** Ian Maidlow  
Transport House, 101 Madingley Road  
Cambridge CB3 0EL

tel: 01223 353 048 fax: 01223 311 081

**Regional Secretary: Steve Hart**  
"Woodberry", 218 Green Lanes, London N4  
2HB tel: 020 8800 4281 fax: 020 8809 6501  
**For national news and issues** please visit  
the *Unite the Union* website at:  
<http://www.unitetheunion.com/>

**More information and links**

Information on the branch including details of  
working groups, branch structure and Minutes  
of monthly branch meetings can be found at:  
[www.amicus.cam.ac.uk](http://www.amicus.cam.ac.uk)

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*Unite the Union* website at:  
<http://www.unitetheunion.com/>

**Branch Meetings**

Branch meetings take place on the first Monday of the month (except when a Bank Holiday occurs) at 12.45 pm in the Bramwell Lounge, University Sports and Social Centre (USC)

**UNITE Cambridge Website**

The Unite / Amicus web pages are  
available at: <http://www.amicus.cam.ac.uk>  
Website co-ordinator : Cathy Salkield. I  
tems for inclusion please contact:  
[webmaster@amicus.cam.ac.uk](mailto:webmaster@amicus.cam.ac.uk)

**Use your website:** copies of draft Minutes  
from monthly Branch meetings can be  
downloaded from the website and taken along  
to Branch meetings: this will help cut down on  
photocopying costs for the Branch.

**Branch Newsletter**

Please display a copies of Newsletter in your  
workplace. If you need additional copies  
please contact Will. Please pass copies of  
your Newsletter to colleagues who may not  
be union members to show them what Unite  
can do for them. Any items for inclusion in the  
Newsletter to Juliet Barrows at:  
[newsletter@amicus.cam.ac.uk](mailto:newsletter@amicus.cam.ac.uk)

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**Branch Officials and Organisation: contact details**

| Name            |  | Email  |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Robbie Fountain | <i>Branch Chair<br/>Individual Cases</i>                   | <a href="mailto:chair@amicus.cam.ac.uk">chair@amicus.cam.ac.uk</a>                       |
| Sara Bennett    | <i>Vice Chair</i>  |  |
| Will Smith      | <i>Branch Secretary<br/>Recruitment &amp; Organisation</i> | <a href="mailto:secretary@amicus.cam.ac.uk">secretary@amicus.cam.ac.uk</a>               |
| Paul Stokes     | <i>Branch Treasurer Pensions</i>                           | <a href="mailto:treasurer@amicus.cam.ac.uk">treasurer@amicus.cam.ac.uk</a>               |
| Andrew Moss     | <i>Training Officer</i>                                    | <a href="mailto:rep-training@amicus.cam.ac.uk">rep-training@amicus.cam.ac.uk</a>         |
| Nik Zolman      | <i>Job Evaluation</i>                                      | <a href="mailto:job-evaluation@amicus.cam.ac.uk">job-evaluation@amicus.cam.ac.uk</a>     |
| John Baldwin    | <i>Retired Members</i>                                     |  |
| Adam Booth      | <i>Student Liaison</i>                                     |  |
| Vacant          | <i>Personal Case Coordinator</i>                           |  |
| Vacant          | <i>Health &amp; Safety</i>                                 | <a href="mailto:health-safety@amicus.cam.ac.uk">health-safety@amicus.cam.ac.uk</a>       |
| Vacant          | <i>Lifelong Learning</i>                                   | <a href="mailto:staff-dev@amicus.cam.ac.uk">staff-dev@amicus.cam.ac.uk</a>               |
| Vacant          | <i>Equal Opportunities</i>                                 | <a href="mailto:dignity-equality@amicus.cam.ac.uk">dignity-equality@amicus.cam.ac.uk</a> |