



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY BRANCH NEWSLETTER May 2011

Pay and Conditions

There has been no news on the current pay claim. More information is expected after the meeting with national negotiators which takes place on 27 May.

Additional paternity leave

In the light of the new right under the Additional Paternity Leave Regulations 2010 (implemented as part of the Work and Families Act 2006) for parents of babies due on or after 3 April 2011 to *additional paternity leave* whereby employed fathers are given the right to up to six months extra leave once the mother has returned to work (during what would have been the mother's maternity leave, with Statutory Paternity Pay during what would have been the mother's maternity pay period, the rest being unpaid) the Council gives notice that, after consultation with the University and Assistants Joint Board, a revised version of Rules J, Maternity and other Family-Related Leave, and Pay has been published. Heads of Institutions have been advised of the revised Rules and the updated Paternity Leave Policy, which can be found on the HR Division website at: <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/policy/paternity.html>. Further copies are available on request from the HR Division.

It should be noted that the right to additional paternity leave is separate and additional to paternity leave offered to eligible employees of up to two weeks after the birth/placement of a baby, in accordance with the *ordinary paternity leave* provisions under the Employment Act 2002 but enhanced under University policy to full pay, provided that satisfactory arrangements can be made to cover the absence at no additional cost to the University. From *Reporter* 20 April 2011

Reps Meeting

There will be a Reps Meeting in the near future to discuss membership and other items.

Pensions

Changes to default retirement age

Consultation is underway this month on the University's proposal to introduce a default retirement age (DRA). From 6 April 2011 the government has abolished DRA leaving individuals to decide when they wish to retire.

From October 2011 however an employer will be able to retain a retirement age, providing they are able to show that it is objectively justifiable as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. A retirement age that can be justified in this way is referred to as an Employer Justified Retirement Age (EJRA).

At present the University has an interim policy which is the same as its previous policy i.e. retirement age for all *University officers* (with certain specified exceptions) is the end of the academic year in which they reach 67. For *all other staff*, the retirement age is the end of the academic year in which they reach 65. The policy includes a procedure for considering requests from University staff to continue working beyond their retirement age.

At the Branch meeting on 9 May, members were urged to attend one of the Open Meetings and put their questions to HR. For a short summary of the proposed options, and how to participate in the consultation, see: <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/2010-11/weekly/6222/section1.shtml#heading2-5> The timescale for the proposed change is uncertain.

The proposals potentially affects all of us - younger and older, "permanent" employees or otherwise.

Additional Open Meeting on DRA:

Thursday 26 May 12.30pm at Babbage Lecture Theatre

There is a meeting at Addenbrooke's on Friday 27 May 2011 12.30pm in Lecture Theatre 2

Unite in legal challenge to CPI pension change

Unite, in conjunction with other unions, has initiated proceedings for a judicial review of the Government's decision to adopt the lower CPI inflation index, rather than the customary RPI inflation index, for the purposes of statutory pension increases.

The challenge asserts that for an invalid reason, an inappropriate index has been chosen and that this confounds unreasonably members' legitimate expectations for pension increases based on RPI.

Gail Cartmail, Assistant General Secretary, commented 'The switch to CPI is, in our view, morally wrong and we hope to demonstrate through this action that it is also legally wrong. It is not acceptable for such a hugely significant change to have been forced through without any significant consultation'

Unite supports protest over abolition of DLA

Thousands of disabled people lobbied parliament on Wednesday 11 May to protest at plans to abolish the disability living allowance (DLA) and introduce the personal independence payment.

In the June 2010 budget, the government announced plans to reform the DLA by introducing a new assessment and by 2014/15 reducing expenditure on the benefit by £1 billion. Ministers are planning to replace DLA with a new benefit called Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

Unite national officer, Siobhan Endean, said: "It is clear that the disabled will be hard hit by these changes – their lives will become worse as a result. The Con-Dem government plans to make savings at the expense of disabled people. More than 800,000 people will be adversely affected by these proposals which will drive them further into poverty.

Unite for our NHS

For up to date information on the campaign see: <http://action.unitetheunion.com/keep-pressure-up>

BA strike: agreement to end dispute

British Airways and the Unite union have reached an agreement to settle the long-running industrial dispute. Unite said BA had agreed to restore travel concessions to staff who went on strike and award a two-year pay deal worth up to 7.5%.

The dispute has lasted for almost two years and involved 22 days of strikes. The agreement will now be put to a ballot of about 10,000 union members.

Plans to dilute employment protection policies

Coalition proposals, unveiled earlier this month, centre on cutting compensation payments for discrimination in the workplace; reducing the current requirement by employers that consultations over collective redundancy are at least 90 days; and diluting of the Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment Regulations (TUPE) which protects the pay and conditions of public sector workers transferred between companies.

Unite's general secretary Len McCluskey said that instead of mounting a further onslaught on working people, the government should concentrate on creating jobs and boosting the manufacturing sector which is in the doldrums.

Read more at: http://www.unitetheunion.org/news_events/latest_news/plans_to_make__a_bonfire__of_e.aspx?lang=en-gb

End of allotments?

Eric Pickles, the Communities Secretary, is examining plans to free local authorities from a 103-year-old obligation to provide plots of public land for cultivation by gardeners. The proposals could see local authorities, many of them strapped for cash under government-imposed cuts, selling off allotment land for social housing or even for profit to major companies.

The move has triggered a wave of protest from allotment society members and gardeners, who have lobbied Mr Pickles to rethink the plans. The *Independent on Sunday*, backed by the nation's leading gardeners and chefs launched a campaign, Dig for Victory, to force ministers to safeguard the public right to allotments. For more than a century, the allotment has been stitched into the fabric of British life, celebrated in the Second World War Dig for Victory campaign, the self-sufficiency movement represented by the 1970s comedy *The Good Life*, and the current enthusiasm for growing your own.

Branch News

Will Smith, Branch Secretary, announced that, though close, he had been unsuccessful in gaining election to the National Executive Committee. He thanked everyone for their support.

With the retirement of Robbie, there is a vacancy for Branch Chair. A new Chair will be elected at the next branch meeting on 6 June. Branch members are asked to send nominations to Will Smith, Branch Secretary, Computing Service prior to this meeting.

Cambridge University Press

The Press will hold its Annual Meeting at the end of May.

Congratulations to Sara Bennett who was elected to the National Executive Committee.

Regional News

The next Regional Sector Committee Meeting will take place on Friday 27 May in Cambridge. Reps from the branch will be attending. .

Technicians: skills and training

Mike Robinson, Unite National Officer for Education, has written to UCEA about the recent study published by Dr Paul Lewis from King's College London which draws attention to the probable skills gap in HE as technicians retire. His paper concurs with much of Unite's own research and other reports concerning technician recruitment, training and retention. Mike Robinson considers that this issue should be discussed at national level.

National News

The Branch congratulated Unite's new General Secretary, Len McCluskey.

Ex-General Secretary Tony Woodley is now responsible for the Unite Organisation and Recruitment Team. Tony will soon be visiting Cambridge University, which has been chosen as a centre for a new recruitment initiative.

Motions

No motions were put forward at the branch meeting on 9 May 2011.

Been and gone but worth remembering:

Thursday 28 April 2011
World Day for Health and Safety at Work

Voluntary Severance Scheme

It is our understanding that the university received approximately 480 approaches on this resulting in 361 formal applications, more than expected.

Unite have asked for an equalities impact assessment for this.

EMBS checks

At the branch meeting on 9 May it was announced from the floor that EMBS will be carrying out checks at departments throughout the university on heating and cooling systems as part of the EU Energy Savings Initiative.

The Branch Secretary reminded members that, whilst H & S regulations do not specify an upper limit for workplace temperatures, the Approved Code of Practice which accompanies this legislation, does state that temperatures should be "reasonable".

Unite Women's National Week Sunday 19 June - Friday 24 June 2011 Eastbourne Centre, Eastbourne

Women's National Week is held every year as part of Unite's commitment to encourage and support women's involvement.

It is held alternately during the school term and school holidays. This year, it will begin on Sunday 19th June in the late afternoon and end on Friday 24th June. More information at: http://www.unitetheunion.org/news__events/events/womens__national_week_2011.aspx

CU Assistants' CPS Members' Meeting **Wednesday 6 July 2011 at 1200 noon** Babbage Lecture Theatre New Museums site, Downing Street

If there is a subject you would like raised or have a specific question for the meeting, please contact Sue Curryer on sec28@cam.ac.uk by **17 June**

Levellers Day 2011: Saturday 14 May
Burford, Oxfordshire
This year's theme is jobs and the future of employment. See: <http://www.levellers.org.uk/>

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

Acting Regional Secretary: Peter Kavanagh
"Woodberry", 218 Green Lanes, London N4
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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

For national news and issues please visit the
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.
Items for inclusion - please contact:
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

Branch Officials and Organisation: contact details

Name		Email
Vacant	<i>Branch Chair Individual Cases</i>	chair@amicus.cam.ac.uk
Sara Bennett	<i>Vice Chair</i>	
Will Smith	<i>Branch Secretary Recruitment & Organisation</i>	secretary@amicus.cam.ac.uk
Paul Stokes	<i>Branch Treasurer Pensions</i>	treasurer@amicus.cam.ac.uk
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John Baldwin	<i>Retired Members</i>	
Adam Booth	<i>Student Liaison</i>	
Vacant	<i>Personal Case Coordinator</i>	
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