



Inside... Million Voices for Public Services at Guilfest, plus maximum working hours all inside...

SOUTH EAST young members

Issue Four
September 2010
www.unison.org.uk/southeast

To contact UNISON Young Members in the South East:
T: 01483 406 512
E: s.hill@unison.co.uk



GUILFEST 2010

Young members spread the word

By Charlotte Anstiss, Kim Allen and Tim Allen – South Eastern Electricity

2010 has seen yet another fantastic year in which the UNISON South East Young Members Forum co-ordinated a successful campaigning event at Guilfest. From 16th to the 18th of July activists and staff promoted UNISON at Guilford's very own music festival, with the support of several UNISON South East branches, the Communication Workers Union (CWU) and Thompson's Solicitors.

Guilfest isn't too big, or too small – it's just right for a local independently run festival for all of the family, in previous years it has been compared to "V", Reading and Glastonbury! This year the review is being done by 3 members of the Young Members Forum – so you will get a taste of what to expect next year.

Our tent this year was full to the brim with artists of all different genres, ages and character, we even had to turn a few bands away as we couldn't fit them into our schedule.

Setting the music and dancing aside for a moment, the UNISON wanted to deliver its message to everyone:

- Stop cutting vital public services
- Stop cutting public service jobs
- Cut bankers' bonuses, bring in a Robin Hood tax
- In-house services instead of consultants
- Cut out the privatisation profiteers

Here are just a few of the bands that helped make the UNISONzone the best tent by far: - AVONDALE45, Will B and The Bikini Black Special, The Fabulous Fezheads, The Gutterhearts, Elizabeth Andscome, The Infidels, Meat Raffle

So what's this all about, then?

UNISON is the union for workers in public services – but you probably already knew that. What you might not know is that UNISON has over 75,000 members under the age of 27, and that we organise as the Young Members' Network. The network exists to bring together young members, to campaign on the issues that matter to us – in work and in our communities – and to fight for a better deal for our members and the essential services we provide.

In the South East, we have a Young Members' Forum, which meets every three months to discuss our issues, and how we're going to campaign on them. If you're a new member of UNISON, the forum meetings are a great place to meet other young members and find out more about what it means to be a UNISON activist. It isn't all meetings and motions – we go out and campaign, and be the change we want to see.

We hope this newsletter gives a flavour of the work that we can do – but it doesn't just happen by itself; it takes the energy, passion and dynamism of young members like you to make it happen. Don't worry; we're not going to pile on the work! How much you get involved is up to you, and all contributions are welcome – it all makes a real difference.

We're a democratic union, which is why the forum and its Chair and Vice Chair are elected. In the South East, your Chair is Shelley Nardini of West Berkshire branch, and your Vice Chair is Chris Leary of Surrey County branch. Providing support are our staff members Mick Moriarty and Sam Hill.

If you'd like to have a chat and find out more, please don't hesitate to call or drop us an email.

Guilfest 2010 (cont)

Sunday, The Rhizomes, Smythe & Taylor, The Toniks, Witchdoktors, BaBar Luck, Charley Farley Sunday Four.... and that's just to name a few.

Among a variety of bands, debates, poetry readings and petitions, CWU senior deputy general secretary Tony Kearns lead a debate on keeping Royal Mail in the public sector and spoke in Sunday's key debate with Dave Prentis, UNISON general secretary, on defending public services, while CWU National youth chair Kye Dudd spoke about the importance of unions to young workers

On Sunday's discussion Dave Prentis spoke about the personal tragedies that the cuts and job losses were causing across the country. "Some 25 per cent of school leavers this year will not find jobs," he explained, adding: "We're not all in this together as the government tells us - there will be a lost generation thanks to the cuts."

One term that has stuck in my head since the weekend was said by both Lucy McSherry and Shelley Nardini - "We are often referred to as the youth of the future, we are not the future, we are now"

Guilfest has given us chance to reach out to workers in the public sector in such a chilled and relaxed environment than the workplace where it feels so formal, this has given us a fantastic opportunity to reach out to potential members in a new and modern way.

This year was my first year at Guilfest as a UNISON Member, and the atmosphere there was awesome!! Our tent had the best selection of bands performing – The Rhizomes made 2 appearances, and both times the tent was heaving with people dancing! I'm gutted that we had to leave early on the Sunday as The King Blues did a last minute set – but there's always next year!

- **Kim Madisetti**

2010's Guilfest has set the standards high for the coming years! Orbital & Sub Focus were by far the best big acts that performed this year, both sets saw us dancing like crazy people – it was amazing!! Our tent was permanently buzzing with people of all ages enjoying the various music sets and discussion sessions on important issues that we had to offer.

- **Tim Allen**





Know your rights! MAXIMUM HOURS

16 and 17 year olds

If you're no longer at school and you're 16 or 17, the law refers to you as a 'young worker'. 'Young workers' are classified in law as anyone who is no longer at school and are 16 or 17. Usually, anyone classified as a 'Young workers' is not allowed to **work more than eight hours a day or 40 hours a week**. These restrictions should not be ignored.

Any young worker who is working more than four and a half hours a day should be allowed a **30 minute break**, though it must not be offered at the beginning or end of your shift.

Over 18 years old

Adult workers cannot be forced to work more than **48 hours a week on average**; the average is worked out over a 17 week period. In some circumstances this 48 time limit does not apply, for example, if you work in the emergency services and police.

However, adult workers **can opt out of the 48 hour** working week but it must be voluntary and be held in writing. No one should be treated unfairly if they refuse to opt out of the 48 hours time limit.

Any adult worker who is working more than six hours a day is allowed a 20 minute break, though it must not be offered at the beginning or end of your shift. All workers, including part-time, freelance and agency workers are covered by these rules.

In addition, any extra breaks which are needed as a **result of health conditions or a disability** should be allowed or your employer could be in breach of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Emma Palizi, SE Electricity Branch

a million voices for public services

A million voices for public services at Guilfest

Simon Gold from the Reading Borough branch explains how we took our Million Voices campaign to the masses at Guilfest

This year the focus at Guilfest for UNISON was on the "Million voices for public services campaign", with 382 voices added to the campaign. Festival goers joined in with debates hosted by the SE YMF in the UNISONzone along with speakers Dave Prentis (General Secretary, UNISON) and Tony Kearns (Deputy Senior General Secretary, CWU).

Dave Prentis vowed that UNISON would be there to protect our vital services stating,

"We face tough times, but we will fight for every job; we will stand with those campaigning to defend their schools, their hospitals, their libraries, their care homes. We will speak up for the voiceless and the vulnerable and hold the powerful to account."

The event showed us that there is overwhelming support for public services to stay public with surveys showing that 72% of the people we asked were unhappy with the possible privatisation of public services. We also did what we could to dispel the views on public service workers portrayed by the media of "Gold Plated" pension packages. One of the questions on our survey asked was,

"What do you think is the average annual pension for women in local Government?" The possible answers were £2000, £4000 or £7000

Only 24% of the people we asked got the answer of £2000 correct, but no one left us without knowing the true figure!

The public are who we serve and it is the public who can help us win this battle against the cuts being made to our vital services. The more we get our voices heard, the more support we will receive. It is with events like Guilfest and the protests at the Civic Centre that will aid us in our battle.

Sign up to Million Voices – visit www.unison.org.uk/million

SOUTH EAST young members

If you would like to go, then contact your branch secretary for more information.

Existing SE YMF members should contact Sam Hill at the Guildford office on 01483 406 521.

I want to Join UNISON's Young Members Network

Are you aged under 27? Are you a member of UNISON? If so, you can join our Network.

- UNISON is here to fight for the issues that are important to you.
- Young people are more likely to be lower paid, have financial difficulties, and be on temporary contracts. Young people have more difficulty getting affordable housing and are more likely to get into trouble at work or be bullied.
- It is also true that young people will face many tough pension problems now and in the future.
- Joining the young members network does not commit you to doing anything. What it does mean is that you will receive the relevant information for people under the age of 27, like this newsletter.

If you want to receive information about your rights, and details of the courses and events UNISON runs for young people, or how you can get more involved, please fill this in and return to s.hill@unison.co.uk or the address to the left.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Branch (if known): _____

Membership number: _____

Telephone Number (Please state if work, home or mobile number): _____

Date of Birth: _____

E-mail address (Where possible we will send you any correspondence by e-mail): _____