

BGCM Report  
**2017**

# **REBUILD AND TRANSFORM BRITAIN**

The Report of the Executive Committee  
May 2015-May 2017 to the Biennial General  
Council Meeting, Stratford Upon Avon,  
Warwickshire, May 14-16, 2017



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# OUR AFFILIATES



Aegis

Association of Educational Psychologists (AEP)

Artist Union England

Bakers Food and Allied Workers' Union

Bectu

CCISUA

Community

GMB

Institute of Football Management & Administration (IFMA)

League Managers Association (LMA)

Musicians Union

NAPO

NASS

National Union of Journalists (NUJ)

NAUTILIS International

PCS

Professional Cricketers' Association (PCA)

Professional Footballers' Association (PFA)

Prospect

Prison Officers' Association

Scottish Artist Union

Social Workers' Union (SWU)

Society of Union Employees (SUE)

Transport Salaries Staffs' Association (TSSA)

# STANDING ORDERS FOR THE BGCM

1. The President shall maintain order and decide all points of order.
2. The President shall decide priority of speeches, according to the order in which a delegate catches his/her eye.
3. The President shall call for the terms of a motion, or an amendment, before any speech is delivered thereon. Except in the case of an emergency approved by the Executive Committee and the General Council no motion or amendment can be moved unless submitted in accordance with the terms of Rule 6 of the Federation's rules.
4. In the case of a disorder arising, the President shall have the power to adjourn the meeting to a time he/she shall fix, and his/her leaving the Chair shall terminate the session.
5. Should there be equality of votes on any issue where the vote is taken by show of hands the President may, subject to the terms of Rule 7, exercise a casting vote.
6. When a report is submitted by a committee, a member of that committee shall have the right to move its adoption.
7. The previous question, or the motion to pass to next business, shall always have priority, and if carried, the next business must be taken.
8. The mover only of an original motion shall have the right to reply, but in his/her reply he/she must not introduce new matter. Other delegates can only be heard by permission of the meeting, and to clear up misunderstandings with regard to essential parts of their previous speeches.
9. If a delegate rises to a point of order, he/she must specify the rule or practice which he/she thinks is being violated. The delegate in possession of the floor must sit down while the point of order is being raised, and the objector must sit down while the President is giving a ruling.
10. Discussion shall cease if the motion 'that the question be now put' is carried by a two thirds majority.
11. At an adjourned debate the mover of the adjournment shall be first heard.
12. No amendment shall be proposed which would be tantamount to a direct negative of the whole proposal.
13. An amendment must be seconded in the same way as motions, otherwise it must drop.
14. When an amendment has been moved and seconded it must be stated from the Chair before the debate is allowed to proceed.
15. There can be only one amendment before the meeting at one time.
16. If the amendment is put and carried it then becomes the substantive motion to which another amendment can be moved before it is put and carried as the substantive motion.
17. If the amendment is put and lost the original motion is then open to the moving of another amendment which, if carried becomes the substantive motion.
18. No delegate can move two amendments of the same motion.
19. No delegate shall be permitted to move an amendment while a previously moved amendment is under discussion

# LIST OF BGCM VENUES 1899-2017

	Year	Place	No. of Delegates	Chairman
*	1899	London	58	Mr W.J. Davis
*	1900	Birmingham	48	Mr Pete Curran
1	1900	Nottingham	66	Mr Pete Curran
2	1901	Glasgow	71	Mr Pete Curran
3	1902	Leicester	77	Mr Pete Curran
4	1903	Dublin	70	Mr Pete Curran
5	1904	Bristol	68	Mr Pete Curran
6	1905	Cardiff	76	Mr Pete Curran
7	1906	Southampton	82	Mr Pete Curran
8	1907	York	96	Alderman Allen Gee, JP
9	1908	Oxford	91	Mr Pete Curran, JP, MP
10	1909	Blackpool	114	Mr Pete Curran, JP, MP
11	1910	Swansea	97	Alderman Allen Gee, JP
12	1911	Dundee	92	Alderman Allen Gee, JP
13	1912	London	128	Alderman Allen Gee, JP
14	1913	Cork	81	Mr James O'Grady, MP
15	1914	Liverpool	102	Mr Joseph Cross, JP
16	1915	Derby	108	Mr James O'Grady, MP
17	1916	Leeds	91	Mr James O'Grady, MP
18	1917	Gloucester	94	Mr James O'Grady, MP
19	1918	Leicester	112	Mr James O'Grady, MP
20	1919	Scarborough	99	Councillor T. Mallalieu, MP
21	1920	Leamington	99	Mr Joseph Cross, JP
22	1921	Bangor	66	Councillor T. Mallalieu, JP
23	1922	Dumfries	64	Councillor T. Mallalieu, JP
24	1923	Bridlington	63	Mr Alfred Short, MP
25	1924	Bournemouth	58	Mr Alfred Short, MP
26	1925	Blackpool	59	Mr F.W. Birchenough, JP
27	1926	Dover	60	Mr F.W. Birchenough, JP
28	1927	Llandudno	48	Alderman Alex Hutchinson, JP
29	1928	Yarmouth	44	Alderman Alex Hutchinson, JP
30	1929	Southport	52	Mr J.F. Sime
31	1930	Morecambe	44	Mr J.F. Sime
32	1931	Blackpool	54	Mr C. Kean, MBE, JP
33	1932	Aberystwyth	43	Mr C. Kean, MBE, JP
34	1933	Blackpool	43	Councillor W. Aucock, JP
35	1934	Southport	46	Councillor W. Aucock, JP
36	1935	Hastings	44	Mr W. Saxon
37	1936	Llandudno	54	Mr W. Saxon
38	1937	Scarborough	52	Mr J. Frayne
39	1938	Glasgow	54	Mr J. Frayne
40	1939	Skegness	53	Mr A. Naesmith, JP
41	1940	Blackpool	49	Mr A. Naesmith, JP
42	1941	Llandudno	48	Mr John Lee, OBE, JP
43	1942	Blackpool	49	Mr John Lee, OBE, JP
44	1943	Southport	44	Mr Albert Taylor
45	1944	Morecambe	45	Mr Albert Taylor
46	1945	Morecambe	49	Mr H M Moulden
47	1946	Scarborough	49	Mr H M Moulden
48	1947	Dundee	46	Mr F Dickinson
49	1948	Llandudno	50	Mr F Dickinson
50	1949	Morecombe	103	Councillor F Worthington, JP
51	1950	Llandudno	68	Councillor F. Worthington, JP

# LIST OF BGCM VENUES 1899-2017, CONTINUED

	Year	Place	No. of Delegates	Chairman
52	1951	Scarborough	70	Mr A. Knowles, OBE, JP
53	1952	Morecambe	70	Mr A. Knowles, OBE, JP
54	1953	Great Yarmouth	65	Mr A.C.C. Robertson, JP
55	1954	Blackpool	72	Mr A.C.C. Robertson, JP
56	1955	Scarborough	71	Mr C. Heap, OBE, JP
57	1956	Blackpool	69	Mr C. Heap, OBE, JP
58	1957	Blackpool	75	Mr A.E. Head, JP
59	1958	Morecambe	68	Mr A.E. Head, JP
60	1959	Brighton	66	Mr J.H. Wigglesworth, OBE
61	1960	Blackpool	74	Mr A.G. Tomkins, CBE
62	1961	Scarborough	71	Mr A.G. Tomkins, CBE
63	1962	Blackpool	75	Mr R. Driver, JP
64	1963	Morecambe	69	Mr R. Driver, JP
65	1964	Blackpool	78	Mr F. Titherington, JP
66	1965	Llandudno	79	Councillor L. Jackson
67	1966	Scarborough	85	Alderman J.W. Whitworth, JP
68	1967	Dundee	78	Mr E.D. Sleeman
69	1968	Morecambe	83	Baillie R. Doyle, JP
70	1969	Scarborough	87	Mr F.C. Henry, OBE, JP
71	1970	Weston-Super-Mare	80	Mr F.G. Hague, JP
72	1971	Eastbourne	79	Mr J. Browning, JP
73	1972	Scarborough	86	Mr A. Howcroft, JP
74	1973	Southport	84	Mr J.K.W. Arnold
75	1974	Weston-Super-Mare	75	Mr E. Tullock
76	1975	Douglas, IOM	79	Mr H.L.G. Gibson, MBE, JP
77	1976	Bournemouth	82	Mr T. Whittaker
78	1977	Edinburgh	86	Mrs M. Fenwick, MBE, JP
79	1978	Torquay	82	Mr D. Hill
80	1979	Scarborough	91	Mr D.R. Coates
81	1980	Eastbourne	75	Mr J. Martin, MBE, JP
82	1981	Southport	75	Mr H.M. Wareham
83	1982	Bournemouth	70	Mr L.R. Smith
84	1983	Weston-Super-Mare	60	Mr J.J. Quinn, MBE, JP
85	1984	Scarborough	73	Mrs A. Spencer
86	1985	Eastbourne	70	Mr C.P. McCarthy
87	1987	Scarborough	65	Mr D.A.C. Lambert
88	1989	Bournemouth	55	Mr J. McChristie
89	1991	Llandudno	57	Mr M. Murray
90	1993	Plymouth	54	Mr K. Edmondson, JP
91	1995	Douglas, IOM	58	Mr A. Hitchmough
92	1997	Bournemouth	58	Mr R. Marron
93	1999	Blackpool	57	Mr A. McCarthy
94	2001	Torquay	44	Mr T. Pye
95	2003	Cardiff	52	Mr M. J. Leahy
96	2005	Edinburgh	45	Mr D. Farrell
97	2007	Belfast	44	Mr G. Oakes
98	2009	Oxford	44	Mr D. Nicholls
99	2011	Manchester	46	Mr J. Marino
100	2013	Leicestershire	34	Mr J. Mann, MBE
101	2015	Leicestershire	48	Mr J. Fray
102	2017	Stratford upon Avon	40	Mr B. Marshall

GCM's 1899 to date 6.

\* Special Conferences

# GENERAL SECRETARY'S INTRODUCTION



*Doug Nicholls, General Secretary, GFTU*

*Photo courtesy of Ade Marsh Photography*

We have welcomed five new affiliates over the last two years: the Artists Union of England, Nautilus International, the Prison Officers' Association, the Scottish Artists' Union and the Social Workers' Union.

That such tremendous trade unions, some new and developing, some extensively established in their fields and throughout the world, should seek to join us is both a great honour and a testament to the high relevance of the GFTU and our ability to give genuine, value for money support.

There is an increasingly vital place for the GFTU in the trade union movement. We are committed to getting the best for our affiliates and their members. This is why over the last two years we have offered new services, found new ways of supporting each other, made new partnership agreements to support our affiliates and launched our biggest and best education programme ever.

It is why also we are developing a new concept of social enterprise together. The more Quorn Grange Hotel and Nursery are supported, the more revenue we have to invest in education. The more our new ethical shop, our forthcoming new publishing company and our mutual support services are supported, the more we have to invest in education and the lower our affiliation fees can be.

Trade unions did not begin exclusively as workplace organisations. Even very highly occupationally specific unions have had a role in the wider community and in the support of members' families and entire lives. We are associated in origin with co-operative production, friendly and benevolent societies, with early welfare provision, with mutuality and solidarity in their widest senses.

Trade union investments in the early days, in fact broadly speaking until the 1980s, were in socially useful ventures. Unions invested in utilities, local government, schools, union building schemes and public services. They did not speculate on the risky money markets.

At the centre of our new approach to encouraging affiliates to work together more and invest together in socially useful and supportive projects has been our support for our Educational Trust which is seeking to create more self-reliance and sustainability with higher quality services.

At the centre of the Trust's work is the operation of the hotel, the development of new purposeful initiatives which support the trade union movement and generate income.

Supplementing this work has been our 2015 Summit and our 2016 Union Building Conference which led us in the direction of new combined initiatives to pool resources, save costs, add to membership income and support each other through new forms of solidarity.

We are actively committed to the expansion of the Quorn site to raise permanent funding streams. Equally we are exploring new services and initiatives which will help affiliates, and also expand the work of the Trust.

We have been doing this in a political and economic climate more inimical to our interests than ever before. The Trade Union Act seeks to frustrate us. Mass unemployment looms continually over us. The unnecessary austerity agenda has brought extreme crisis to many of our sectors, causing literally life or death struggles for some affiliates.

The youth service has all but disappeared, we have seen the predicted crisis in probation following the privatisation which NAPO warned against. Prisons have faced the most incredible chaos as a result of overcrowding and underfunding and low pay. The scourge of redundancies, zero hours contracts and low pay have plagued many of our affiliates again. We had to fight in one sector for the very survival of national collective bargaining, and in this sector we won.

We note with pride that many GFTU affiliates have a high density of membership, strong membership affinity and extensive collective bargaining arrangements. Compared with the workforce and Movement generally, GFTU unions have exemplary records in these regards.

The generational and entirely ridiculous economic shift away from manufacturing towards financial speculation has skewed the economy and threatened the very existence of some unions. The mining union NACODS left us this year as the last coal mine closed. Community, the union for life, has had to brave the near closure of the steel industry and work to save the heart of our economy and actually reopen closed steel plants. We need a real economy of industrial production, not the candyfloss of the City of London.

No area of working life whether in sport, finance, entertainments, industry, transport, criminal justice, health or education has escaped the destructive hand of the market.

But no matter how inclement the weather, trade unions remain the most resilient organisations in society and the best, because they find ways of surviving and prospering. The GFTU is here to support this process in new ways.

This was true 100 years ago when our predecessors met at the time of the First World War with all of its appalling slaughter. It was true in 1927 just after the General Strike and start of the Great Depression when our predecessors planned a great centre for trade unionism in London which the GFTU built as Central House where work started in 1930. It was certainly true of the post war generation and all the hundreds of unions that made the GFTU a key player in the reconstruction of the





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country at that time. 60 years after the creation of the NHS it faces its toughest time.

This spirit of resilience and rebuilding is with us today and we can celebrate that there is a renewed confidence that the GFTU will support all of our affiliates in prospering and growing and doing things better.

Practical support for members and affiliated unions is grounded in our sense of history, now advanced in our education programme. It is bolstered by our recognition that in campaigning, organising and educating trade unionists need to get more than bread on the table, our imaginations must be stirred too and the roses of art and culture must be nurtured throughout the movement to inspire us again.

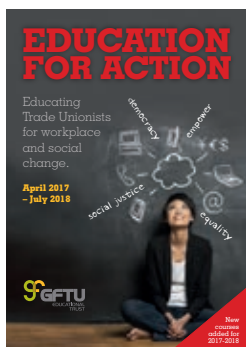
There is no avoiding the GFTU's long held belief that science, technology and manufacturing renewal remain the central priorities if the economy is to benefit us all. I for one believe that the coincidence between our membership of the EU and the destruction of our manufacturing base was not in fact a coincidence. I see new opportunities now.

In the coming period I believe that we must do much more work to assist the complex processes taking place to rebuild manufacturing and high tech industrial production. We should become prominent in this as an organisation again.

Our generation must leave the GFTU stronger for future generations and I am confident that through the important discussions of this BGCM we will do so. The historic strength of the GFTU lies in the determination of small groups of unions achieving great things. We have determination and ambition. It has been a great privilege to work with you all.

Doug Nicholls,  
March 2017.

# THE GFTU'S NEW EDUCATION PROGRAMME



## Education journalist Andrew Mourant draws out the strengths of the GFTU's education programme.

What should Trade Union education be about - and who should run it? That debate has smouldered, sometimes catching fire, over more than a century. Its heart and soul has been fought over by, among others, the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) founded in 1903, and the National Council of Labour Colleges (NCLC), established after a student strike at Ruskin College, Oxford in 1909.

Ruskin dissidents, mainly trade unionists, were appalled at the prospect of Oxford University dictating content from an high - teaching economics with a ruling class viewpoint. These days the battleground is different. Many who care about TU education have a shared concern that, over the last 40 years, it's become narrow and emasculated; and devoid of political context.

### Change of heart and mind needed.

Now wheels are in motion to reverse this process – for TU education to reconnect and rediscover the heart and soul that has been ebbing away since the 1970s. A focus on economic and political issues withered; purely functional training for TU reps in negotiating and representation became the new priority.

This priority helped serve extensive national collective bargaining. But today collective bargaining covers less than 20% of workers and the consensus that unions are part of the solution has long since disappeared. More needs to be done to organise in the workplace and establish a firmer social position for unions.

After the union strengths of the 1970s with union education linked to the mechanics of negotiations, came 18 years of Tory government - that prolonged open season for eroding workers' rights. Union membership, from 1979-1995, was estimated to have shrunk from 50%-32% of the workforce. State funding for TU education was cut; conditions attached; content monitored.

### Neutralising education.

There was little improvement under Tony Blair's Labour government as public funding of union courses veered towards skills qualifications. It was a far cry from the early days of NCLC when the focus was on Marxist economics and history and a confident recognition that without organised workers not much happened in life.

At times, TU Education has also had to face the enemy within, notoriously at the former Manchester College of Arts and Technology (Mancat). In 2005 five members of the TU Ed department, who'd long felt persecuted by a hostile management, were adjudged to have been unfairly sacked because of their involvement in union activities.

The GFTU Educational Trust is helping turn the tide by launching the most extensive programme in its history. This aims to revive the best of the old – for instance, the neglected world of trade union history - and address today's challenges such as zero-hours contracts, with help for those at the sharp end of the gig economy and all the insecurity that brings.

"We've never depended on government funding," says GFTU Trust secretary Doug Nicholls. "Our programme seeks to restore a more politicised agenda alongside its commitment to skills training."

### Empowering education.

It also aims to banish the drab world of 'chalk and talk' teaching. For instance, it's commissioned a 75-minute performance piece *Our History, Our Future* that can be toured around the unions: history unfurling in pictures; video clips; songs - all very much in tune with GFTU's record of promoting culture.

How best can the arts be deployed in the Trade Union movement? There's a course to consider that too. Polemic art throughout history - from Picasso's *Guernica* to a century of poetry dating from World War 1 - will be examined. The GFTU clearly believes it is not just about bread but roses too.

In November GFTU will hold a weekend festival to celebrate all the art forms and how they benefit TU campaigning, organising and education.

The event will also draw on the talents of our greatest cultural workers' - affiliates include the Musician's Union - to help 'fire imagination'.



Photos courtesy of ReportDigital

Andrew Mourant is a freelance journalist who has contributed extensively to the Times Educational Supplement and Education Guardian.

One joy of education is stumbling across stuff you never knew. Those who think they're familiar with milestones of working class history can expect some surprises in the GFTU's Our History programme. People may have heard of the 1381 peasant revolts, but fewer, almost certainly, of those in 1549 led by Norfolk yeoman farmer Robert Kett against land enclosure. With this uprising came some of the first demands for a more equal society. Students can now find out all about it.

### **New content, new methods.**

Drab content and uninspired educational methods are, says Nicholls, a peculiarly British curse, whereas Labour movements overseas 'have embraced radical learning theories and methods.' "The way learning is delivered is as important as what's delivered, sometimes more so." Informative, informal day schools and stimulating discussion is the way forward, the GFTU believes.

So, when it comes to understanding Britain's complex political machine, rather than listen to a lecturer wielding class notes, workers will travel to Westminster to meet union colleagues in the Lords and Commons. The course will be led by former MP trade unionists who know all about the arcane world of Early Day Motions and Private Members' Bills.

Parliament is full of people who appear born to rule - a disproportionate number schooled in self-projection at public school and Oxbridge. Yet public speaking rarely comes easily to the majority. A new course on offer is designed to help redress the balance for trade unionists lacking the self-confidence and know-how to hold an audience.

### **Motivational learning.**

GFTU's programme draws heavily on what Nicholls describes as 'a rich tradition of informal learning theories in Britain.' "We learn from each other - there's no substitute for face to face learning. Youth and community education techniques have been motivational for generations."

The 'radical' adult tradition has drawn on progressive teaching methods from around the world, he adds. GFTU has been working with, among others, colleagues in Latin America to reform teaching styles. It's also forged new partnerships in higher education - with Leeds Beckett University and Newman University, Birmingham - to offer new ways of training the trainers in particular.

Most of GFTU's courses, webinars, festivals and seminars are free to members of affiliated unions. A forum recently opened on its website for people to swap notes, share best practice and 'sharpen minds' (see [www.gftu.org.uk](http://www.gftu.org.uk).) "A generation of trade unionists have had the political content stripped from their learning," says Nicholls. "It's all very interesting knowing the detail of redundancy and health and safety legislation, but irrelevant if the workplace is closing down as if because of forces of nature or fate."

"While most people feel austerity is wrong, very few can articulate why it's come about and the political and economic alternative. People have been decapitated from the knowledge of our movement's history for too long. We have to reconstruct a living appreciation of our past to accelerate a better future."

Below: Rebecca Hillman, Exeter University, supporting GFTU's arts' work

Photo courtesy of Kevin Hayes



# RESOLUTIONS 2015/2017 POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION

The GFTU's ability to take meaningful action on issues of wider social and economic and political policy is constrained by the context in which we operate and also determined by the emergence of new central priorities which we cannot predict at the BGCM. In essence over the last two years we have faced a government intent on pursuing the suicidal austerity course and on restraining legitimate trade union activity beyond all reason through the Trade Union Act.

The scale and intensity of difficulties faced by areas of life we strongly support whether it be the Health Service or Probation has been such that we could have been stretched to breaking point. Our focus of activity has of necessity been internal in the sense of reviewing our education and services and facilities to become a stronger support mechanism for our affiliates in their normal course of activities and in their hour of need.



## Resolution 1

### Protecting State Pension for Women

- (1) Conference notes that recent changes to state pension regulations have increased the number of years' NI contributions required to ensure entitlement to a full pension to 35 years. This has been done at the same time as reducing the number of years' credit which can be claimed in respect of time away from work due to child care. This is likely to have a significant impact on pension rights for many women in particular. Conference therefore calls on the GFTU to campaign to reverse both these changes to ensure that women's pension rights are not adversely affected in the future.

## Implementation

GFTU representation has been made on this question.

## Resolution 2

### Abolition of Zero Hour Contracts and Other Detrimental Ways of Undermining Rates of Pay

- (1) That this BGCM calls on government to end the practice of zero hour contracts unless expressly requested by the employee, an end to the Con-Dem workfare schemes that are no better than legalized slavery and an end to juvenile rates of pay where they are used as a means to reduce employment costs.

## Implementation

Support has been given to unions taking up this issue and particular disputes where zero hours contracts have been opposed. The GFTU's own employment practice of course forbids such things and no age discriminatory rates of pay are paid.

## Resolution 3

### Minimum Living Wage

- (1) That this BCTGM supports the BFAWU and TUC campaign to have a minimum wage of £10 per hour throughout all work places in the UK and that we pursue this policy through our individual unions with the government of the day. The impact of such a move will be to stimulate the economy, lift 5 million people out of working poverty and will reduce dependence on benefits which at present subsidise employers who pay low wages. We recognize that there will be employers who cannot pay £10, but that should be a matter for investigation, dependent on profits, dividends paid to shareholders and director salaries. We furthermore send our support and congratulations to the successful \$15NOW campaign being waged across the USA which has seen a dramatic rise in both rates of pay and living standards amongst the working poor.

## Implementation

Support and publicity has been given to this campaign throughout the period.

## Resolution 4

### Pay for Apprentices

- (1) This Conference considers that investing in young people through apprenticeships is fundamentally important to any long-term strategy for economic growth. Conference further considers that all apprenticeships should offer high quality training as well as good prospects and a fair wage. Conference acknowledges that 2 million apprenticeships have been started over this Parliament but recognises that this figure masks a picture of poverty pay and abuse of the system with many employers taking advantage of government support to recruit cheap labour. Conference recognises that the minimum wage for apprentices, which currently starts at just £2.73 an hour, remains shockingly low, but that a significant proportion of employers fail to pay even the miserly legal minimum. Conference notes the findings of the 014 Apprenticeship Pay Survey which found that 14% of all apprentices were paid less than the minimum wage in 014, 24% of 16 to 18 year old apprentices received less than the minimum wage, and 32% of 19 and 20 year old apprentices received less than the minimum wage after their first year. Conference is also profoundly concerned at the continuing gender imbalance in apprenticeship pay with professions where women are traditionally overrepresented such as hairdressing and care the worst culprits for breaking minimum wage law, leading to high drop-out rates and wastage of public money. Conference believes that employers should pay apprentices a living wage wherever possible, and calls on the GFTU Executive to campaign for fair pay for apprentices and tough action against cheating employers

## Implementation

A special day conference on apprenticeships has been called within the new education programme.

## Resolution 5

### The Housing Crisis

- (1) This BGCM agrees there is a drastic shortage of affordable housing nationally. The main cause being the failure of successive governments to encourage the building of affordable housing, ensuring the housing crisis would ease and the building industry and economy would be stimulated. Decades of underinvestment in the social housing sector, de-regulation of the private rental sector and lack of support for the building of new, good-standard social housing has left UK housing in a crisis.
- (2) The much heralded Right to Buy Scheme is also a major cause of the housing shortage. Houses were sold off at massive discounts and the money was not used to build more houses. Furthermore, repossessions and the built in profit these massive discounts gave meant these houses fell into the hands of greedy landlords who charge inflated rents subsidised by the very councils who sold the houses in the first place. Hundreds of thousands of low paid workers on Council waiting lists are forced to rent from profiteering Tory landlords due to lack of affordable housing and their quality of life is eroded by having to pay exorbitant rents.  
  
Working people have long had to suffer insufficient, poor, inadequate and expensive housing, causing social and economic problems, for anyone without sufficient resources wishing to create a life for themselves and the future generation.
- (3) This situation has long affected working local people in areas of high housing costs in the UK, meaning they are priced out of the market. Some tenants and leaseholders in these areas face having their homes subject to being compulsory purchased so that the estates can be demolished and "regenerated" into expensive homes that neither tenants nor leaseholders can afford to rent or buy. This appalling hypocrisy is a form of social cleansing of decent working class people and traditional Labour voters that resulted in prosecution of Dame Shirley Porter of Westminster many years ago in the "homes for votes" scandal. This Conference supports estate regeneration where the primary aim is to improve conditions for existing tenants and

## Implementation

## Resolution 5 (continued)

leaseholders and opposes it where the aim is for private developers to cash in and make loads of money while existing tenants and leaseholders face being kicked out of their homes.

- (4) This BGCM deplores the lack of social housing being provided by the present Government, is aware of the affordable housing crisis and believes much more should be done to build more affordable homes. This Conference calls for GFTU affiliates to:
- call on the Labour Party to investigate using council homes as a cash machine to bridge funding gaps.
  - give local authorities the right to actively purchase houses from the open market, e.g. ex-council houses and empty properties to increase the stock of social housing in their area
  - call on the Government to provide funding for a major house-building programme to build social housing to meet these needs and as a consequence provide thousands of much needed jobs to boost devastated local economies.
  - actively campaign for the reintroduction of policies such as the Fair Rent Act and to pressure the Labour Party to commit to a sustained building programme once in power, to publicise services available which will help those faced with housing difficulties.

## Resolution 6

### UK Manufacturing

- (1) This BGCM is appalled at the deeply unpatriotic way that the Coalition Government is running down UK manufacturing, in favour of foreign ownership of British industry and using free market globalisation as the reason. This Conference calls on the government to support the manufacturing industry. The policy of pure competition in the world market is leading to a decline in UK manufacturing
- (2) The last thirty years has seen the increasing tide of the free market and globalisation, which has eroded the British manufacturing base, seen privatised UK services and increased foreign ownership of key parts of the UK economic infrastructure
- (3) This BGCM believes that the UK Government should ensure, through its own procurement, but also giving a lead through a drive to buy British, that all must be done to reinvigorate and restore UK manufacturing.
- (4) This Conference calls
- on the GFTU to campaign for greater support for our Manufacturing Sector
  - for the GFTU and affiliates to lobby for an unequivocal commitment to reverse Coalition procurement methods where everything is based on price and to commit to processing goods and services in government from companies based in the UK.

## Resolution 7

### White Ribbon Campaign

- (1) This BGCM notes that whilst both men and women can experience domestic violence, the majority of the victims are women and the majority of the perpetrators are men. Police in the UK receive one domestic violence call every minute, which is even more shocking given that less than half of incidents are reported.

## Implementation

## Implementation

Considerable success has been achieved in gaining a new general recognition that the dominance of speculation and the financial sector must be reversed. The GFTU has maintained solidarity with all affiliates notably in the steel industry seeking to save steel production. We have met with new centres of manufacturing and technological excellence to promote a rebuilding of the skill based of the manufacturing sector.

## Implementation

Promotion of this campaign has taken place over the last two years.

## Resolution 7 (continued)

- (2) This BGCM believes that a cultural change is needed in order to address the issue of domestic violence. The tolerance of sexual and physical violence against women and girls is based on attitudes and beliefs which persist today, decades after the first equalities legislation. The White Ribbon Campaign is a worldwide movement which encourages men to stand with women to condemn domestic violence and asks them to speak up about the issue with fellow men.
- (3) The MU calls on the GFTU and its members to support the White Ribbon campaign, encourage male comrades to sign up and encourage unions and employers to promote the three national helplines - one for female victims, one for male victims and one responding to perpetrators to motivate them to recognise the problem and get help to change.

## Resolution 8

### Outsourcing and Accountability

- (1) On the 1st June 2014 the Probation Service was split into 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies, and a National Probation Service. On 18th December 2014 the 10 year contracts for the CRC's were signed off with the new providers with a view that the contracts are mobilised in February 2015.
- (2) Since the split last year the probation service has been in chaos. There are significant staff shortages which are resulting in high workloads, impacting on service delivery and causing significant levels of stress for staff. ICT failures have resulted in staff having to duplicate work up to four times before assessments and reports can be saved successfully on the IT systems. None of the IT is Assistive Technology friendly having a disproportionate impact on disabled staff. Sickness absence has doubled in both organisations in just four months with 46% of members reporting stress related problems due to their work. In some cases, when members tried to raise concerns about public safety and staff welfare with clients, MPs and other stakeholders they were threatened and criticised. This Biennial Conference calls on all unions to work together to fight stress at work by sharing and promoting best practice; and championing managers and staff who raise these concerns internally and when necessary externally.  
  
Conference notes that the government's ill thought out plans to "reform" probation
- (3) has had a serious impact on Napo members with little or no consideration for their wellbeing. This in turn has had an impact on service delivery which in our view places a direct risk to the public as it undermines public protection and risk management. We call on this GFTU Biennial conference to support all public sector workers who are being asked to do more for less. We acknowledge the impact the outsourcing of probation has had on staff, communities and offenders. Conference supports Napo's campaign to hold all probation providers accountable to deliver quality services, a duty of care to employees and provide ongoing support for our members in relation to health and safety, good practice and good industrial relations.

## Resolution 9

### Oppose the Privatisation of Children's Services

- (1) Government have planned for the marketization and privatisation of children's social services, including child protection investigations and assessments, since early 2014. After huge public opposition to initial proposals, Government moderated regulations to limit transfers to not-for-profit mutual or charities.

## Implementation

## Implementation

Solidarity has been given to NAP throughout this struggle and the General Secretary attended their Conference as a speaker.

## Implementation

The GFTU supported a letter from play work campaigners in The Guardian end May 2015 protesting against the decline in London services. The General Secretary acted as Chair of the Chooseyouth Campaign throughout the period and had many articles on the decline of children's and youth service published.

## Resolution 9 (continued)

- (2) This U-turn is a sham. Similar rhetoric was constant throughout the part-privatisation of probation, with the Cabinet Office spending around £2.5 M promoting not-for-profit and mutual bids. The outcome saw the 3rd Sector excluded apart from a few minor partners in for profit multi-national consortia - Interserve and Sodexo winning over half of all probation contracts between them.
- (3) The DfE are actively encouraging big corporates to set-up "charitable not-for-profit fronts", who they control, direct and 'sell' their support services to, justifying their corporate investment.  

Privatisation fails to deliver what's promised for users and taxpayers. Expected savings are unrealistic and user interests become secondary to reducing costs and maximising profits. Services become less accountable as local, regional and national politicians shift the blame when things go wrong and the companies blame poor contract design and management when they get caught ripping off the public (e.g. Serco and G4S in prison and tagging contracts). For these profiteers negotiating with Government is like playing cards with a drunk.
- (4) But most importantly, morally some things should just never be sold for a profit. Support and help to our most vulnerable young people should never be for sale
- (5) The GFTU calls for:
  - a. The new Children's Minister demanding that all plans for the marketization and privatisation of children's services are stopped.
  - b. All unions with an interest in children's services to work together to campaign in the public and parliament against this threat to ensure that resources continue to be directed at providing good public services for children and families on a "not for profit" basis.
- (6) This biennial Conference is appalled the Government proposed wholesale privatisation of Children's Services. Decisions about vulnerable children, including removing them from their families, are some of the most difficult and sensitive that child protection professionals have to make.
- (7) Conference believes establishing a market in child protection would create perverse incentives for private companies to either take more children into care or leave too many living within dangerous families.
- (8) Napo is already witnessing the chaos, confusion and increased risks arising from Government efforts to privatise a huge part of the Probation Service despite the work/staff being awarded the gold standard for service provision. The Government repeated the same argument about private companies providing children's services to "encourage innovation and improve outcomes for children".
- (9) Whilst pre-election considerations and immediate campaigning by Napo and others in the sector contributed to these plans being put on hold for now, the GFTU and affiliates must be vigilant and ready if they re-emerge post an election.

## Resolution 10

### Surveillance of Journalists

- (1) This conference condemns police surveillance of journalists, trade unionists and activists, noting the growing evidence of such unacceptable activity that appears to have reached unprecedented levels.
- (2) Conference notes the revelations that the Metropolitan Police used the Regulation of Investigatory Powers legislation (RIPA) to secretly access a journalist's phone records, internal emails and other sensitive data as a means of exposing sources and whistleblowers, without judicial oversight. Further

## Implementation

A special campaign meeting of Chooseyouth was held in April 2016 and good national publicity was achieved.

## Implementation

The GFTU immediately joined in with those campaigning against the new proposals planned by the government and existing restrictions and behaviours.



## Resolution 10 (continued)

investigations found that many other police forces have also exploited RIPA to spy on journalists and identify their sources – breaching a key tenet of journalistic freedom and the NUJ’s Code of Conduct, the responsibility to protect one’s sources.

- (3) Such methods have also been used against trade unionists and activists as a tool to criminalise dissent and prevent scrutiny of the powerful.
- (4) It is in that context that increasing numbers of journalists and activists have been secretly placed on a police database of so-called “domestic extremists”. Six NUJ members are currently involved in collective legal action to challenge their inclusion on the database, which details intimate details about their lives, including their work, medical history and even their sexuality.
- (5) This conference condemns the lack of action on the part of government to tackle these outrages, and calls on the GFTU to campaign against such outrageous use of surveillance, to call for the restrictions of RIPA and similar pieces of legislation; and as part of that campaign to encourage activists in the movement to carry out subject access requests under the Data Protection Act to expose the extent of state surveillance and support union’s taking legal challenges.

## Resolution 11

### Future of Local Newspapers

- (1) This conference notes the ongoing crisis in the regional newspaper industry that has seen over 140 newspapers close since 2011.
- (2) In that time further waves of redundancies and budget cuts have hit journalists working in local and regional newspapers, with photographers being particularly badly hit in recent months as companies increasingly turn to free so-called “user generated” images and content to fill their pages. Companies have also created “regional subbing hubs”, in the process transferring work from local communities these newspapers are supposed to serve and reflect, losing jobs and longstanding local knowledge and expertise.
- (3) Conference notes that a quarter of local government areas are not covered by a local newspaper and 35 per cent of local government areas are covered by only a single news outlet. In 55 per cent of local government areas the same four companies have majority ownership of the local market.
- (4) Reduced staffing levels have not been accompanied by a reduction in work, and unacceptable workloads and stress for those remaining has reached disturbing levels. The lack of resources also means readers are being shortchanged and once bread-and-butter functions of local newspapers – such as covering council meetings and courts – are being jettisoned because reporters are so thin on the ground.
- (5) Conference notes the efforts of the NUJ in defending jobs and standing up for quality journalism – a vital part of local democracy, holding politicians and businesses to account and providing vital information as well as entertainment.
- (6) Conference therefore calls on the GFTU to campaign vigorously to protect local and regional journalism, and for changes that will allow greater plurality of ownership and better standards of journalism.
- (7) Conference further supports calls for a government-commissioned inquiry into the crisis, which will look at new models of ownership and allow newspapers to be protected with community asset status, which will limit owners’ ability to close publications overnight and allow more time for consultation on their future.

## Implementation

## Implementation

Support was given to the attempt by the NUJ at the Rotherham Advertiser to remove a redundancy notice against their FoC Bro. Phil Turner. Representations were made to management.

## Resolution 12

### Representation on GFTU Executive Committee

- (1) SUE Executive committee reaffirms the importance and value to our members of GFTU affiliation. In particular we commend the education courses through which many of our members have gained new skills and experience.
- (2) SUE wish to support the future expansion of GFTU affiliates and encourage those non affiliated unions to join. In particular we feel that affiliation is of significant value to those smaller organisation like ourselves, who whilst modest in membership number are mighty in terms of the impact we have at the workplace on behalf of members.
- (3) As part of efforts from GFTU to attract other affiliates it is important that their voices are heard and are properly represented on the GFTU executive committee.

We therefore call for the GFTU to bring forward a rule change that would facilitate smaller organisations being represented on the GFTU executive and urge affiliates to support such a rule change should it be tabled.

## Implementation

This resolution was implemented.

## Resolution 13

### Data Collection T&C's

- (1) Conference notes at present employees working for Trade Unions are often represented by other trade Unions who in the outside world are competitors to the employer, or are offered in house 'federations to 'represent' their interests'. Trade Unions as employers are notoriously shy in publishing details of terms and Conditions offered to their staffs.
- (2) For the reasons above Conference agrees to instruct the incoming GFTU Executive to set up a database of terms and conditions of workers who are employed by Trade Unions, and publish the first directory of such by the next bi-annual conference. Conference further believes this is a first but necessary step in bringing some transparency and collective values to the annual cycle of bargaining within the trade union movement.

## Implementation

At this stage there is no appetite amongst affiliated unions to develop this work.

A new HR officers CPD group was created by the GFTU.

Employment and management of union employees figured on the Trade Union Management programme training and the Union Building Conference.

## Resolution 14

### Public Ownership of the Railways

- (1) That this Conference recognises that the privatised railway has failed on all of the measures claimed as the reasons for its existence:
  - Competition between train operators is virtually non-existent after franchises have been let;
  - Instead of cheaper services, passengers now have to pay the highest fares in Europe with a real terms increase of at least 23% since 1995;
  - Far from reducing, annual subsidy to the industry now stands at £5.3 billion, over double that received by British Rail
  - Genuine private sector capital only amounts to 1% of all rail investment, the rest being underwritten by tax payers
  - Train operating companies together continue to extract significant profits amounting to over £200 million a year, even when half of them receive subsidies for socially necessary services.
- (2) Instead of reforming the current system, however, successive governments have sought to maintain it for politically dogmatic reasons whilst refusing to countenance public ownership despite the success of East Coast Trains, taken into state ownership in 2009 upon the failure of the previous franchise.

## Implementation

Thanks to the work of the main rail unions there is now significant and widespread public support for this policy and it features highly in Labour Party policy.

## Resolution 14 (continued)

East Coast Trains was commended by the Office of Rail Regulation as the most cost effective train operator as it received virtually no subsidy and has returned over £800 million in premium payments to the Treasury to date, more than any other operator. Despite the political dogma, most passengers and workers want a rail network that works in the social, economic and environmental interests of all citizens, not just those who want to turn a profit to line the pockets of shareholders.

- (3) As such, Conference calls on the GFTU to support the work of affiliates, community groups and passengers in campaigning for an alternative rail system that is both publicly owned and publicly accountable in line with the vision created by the Transport for Quality of Life's "Rebuilding Rail" report.

## Resolution 15

### Supporting Affiliates

- (1) This BGCM recognises that both the British and Irish trade union movements are distinctive in their organisation. Both have a combination of specialist trade unions organised around particular trades and occupations and industrial groups within larger general unions.
- (2) The BGCM reaffirms the important role that the GFTU plays in complimenting the work of the TUC by offering practical, educational, campaigning and other support for specialist unions and groups within general unions. This BGCM further notes the great number of workers organisations and associations not yet consolidated into trade unions and the tremendous potential that exists for supporting the development of trade unionism amongst the two thirds of workers not currently in unions. The GFTU, jointly with its affiliates, needs to develop a strategy to help nurture trade union growth among these workers.
- (3) The BGCM therefore believes that the GFTU could play an essential role in supporting affiliates in their attempts to build a stronger movement through freeing resources that are often duplicated. This should involve looking at the potential to:
  - a) Pool and share resources including looking at the possibility of building a multi-union HQ and also sharing office space throughout Britain and Ireland;
  - b) Negotiating shared services and facilities between affiliates, the GFTU and third parties to create economies of scale and other savings that individual unions' could not otherwise deliver on their own;
  - c) Develop a strategy that helps generate new income for both the GFTU and its affiliates;
  - d) Develop a plan which delivers membership growth among affiliates and also looks to deliver a strategy to nurture trade union growth among unorganised sectors of our economy.
  - e) Signpost affiliates to companies and service providers who are unionised and offering value for money and quality to trade union clients. The BGCM believes that the combined purchasing power for GFTU affiliates and the development of customised, but shared benefits and services could play a significant role in maintaining the strength of small and specialist trade unions and reaching out to new recruitment areas.
- (4) The BGCM calls upon the Executive to:
  - 1) Produce a discussion paper for affiliates and potential new affiliates on where shared facilities, services and fund raising schemes could be considered and to consider some of the best practice and arrangements that unions have made that could be extended and shared;
  - 2) Organise a working Conference as soon as practical and ideally within

## Implementation

## Implementation

In many ways the implementation of this resolution has formed the basis of the EC's work over the last two years with many new initiatives and two highly successful events for affiliates held and a new suite of services offered.

All elements of the resolution were implemented

## Resolution 15 (continued)

2015 to consider proposals of benefit for affiliates including where best we can reach out to new membership growth areas;

- 3) Continue its good work to encourage mutual working and sharing of facilities and services between affiliates.

## Resolution 16

### Attack on Migrant Workers

- (1) This Conference condemns the right wing media frenzy designed to whip up fear about an influx of immigration, especially in the light of relaxation of labour market controls on migrant citizens from Romania and Bulgaria to other EU member states from 1st January 2014. Although these claims of mass migration to UK were always exaggerated, In the first 3 months of 2014 the amount of Romanians and Bulgarians employed in Britain fell by 4000 to 140000 people. Despite this the pattern of right wing propaganda designed to divert the British electorate from the real causes of the economic crisis has continued to place the blame on immigrants, benefit scroungers etc. The only real beneficiaries from this are UKIP and the far right racist parties like the EDL.
- (2) This Conference condemns the Coalition Government for capitalising on this fear with new raft of legislation aimed to make life even worse for migrants to the UK e.g. stop migrants from claiming benefits in the first three months of living in the UK with the prospect of unemployed migrants being permanently denied housing benefits. These measures have been set up in what the government have described as targeting those who will attempt to exploit the benefits system.
- (3) This is yet another unjust measure taken against migrants in an attempt to scare people from coming to the UK and making us seem like an unwelcoming country.
- (4) In this highly charged atmosphere of racism and anti-immigration hysteria it is appalling that the government is deliberately misinforming the country regarding migrants. A YouGov survey from 2013 showed that most people thought that 500,000 immigrants were coming into the UK and claiming benefits. In reality, 60,000 come into the UK and, only 3% of those 60,000 claim benefits. This may explain an ICM poll that was conducted on 13 January 2014, showing that 54% of people admitted that they thought that EU migrants would have a negative effect on the economy, despite being told beforehand that citizens born in the UK draw more from the welfare state.
- (5) This Conference demands the Government stop pedalling misinformation when official statistics, academic reports and even an independent fiscal watchdog who is an advisor to the government, show that immigration would be beneficial to the UK. This is because most immigrants who arrive into the UK are of working age and will consequentially contribute to taxes; thus contributing to giving a well needed boost to Britain's economy.
- (6) This Conference also calls on leading politicians of all parties not to whip up racial tensions by pandering to anti-immigration sentiment in the false hope of winning support from UKIP. Much of the cause of this fear is the direct result of the neo- liberal drive in this country to deregulate our labour markets by attacking trade unions and diminishing the role of collective bargaining. Employers now set the rate of pay and have been on a relentless drive to reduce wage rates to the bottom – and import low cost labour to fill the jobs local people cannot afford to take.
- (7) This Conference calls on the GFTU to:
  1. Campaign with and amongst our own affiliates, the community and in the media to make the link between racism, fear of immigration and the deregulation of our labour markets;

## Implementation

## Implementation

The TUC campaign document was circulated at the BGCM 2015.

The new GFTU/New Internationalist publishing house is publishing a book of songs in its first tranche of publications which focus greatly on this subject and the need for integration and solidarity.

## Resolution 16 (continued)

2. Link with and support the campaigns by Hope Not Hate and Unite Against Fascism to explain and oppose the racism, xenophobia and far-right policies of UKIP, including their opposition to trade union organisation, beyond this year's General Election;
3. Reinforces the call for collective bargaining to be accepted once more as the best means of regulating pay, distributing income and stopping the race to the bottom which is the real reason why employers are encouraging low cost labour to migrate to this country.

## Resolution 17

### Playwork services

- (1) This conference notes with dismay the damage and destruction wreaked upon play services as a consequence of the austerity agenda that continues to destroy services. We are dismayed at the number of adventure playgrounds, outreach play ranger schemes and play centres across the country that are now closed and unable to support children in poverty at a time when they need the support most. We believe the current emphasis on targeted work to support only children at a point of serious crisis is flawed and fails to value children, Playwork and Playworkers.
- (2) It notes with concern the recently introduced childcare regulations, which seriously affect the professionalisation of the workforce, is leading to widespread redundancies and eroding the quality of experiences-including the safety – of children in after school clubs and holiday playschemes.
- (3) We call on the GFTU to:  
Endorse and promote the Unite statement for employers to adopt to commit to employing qualified Playworkers.  
Endorse the article by Unite Playwork Convenor Chris Martin 'Play is a serious business' as well as the article on the impact of austerity measures on Playworkers in the inaugural Journal of Playwork Practice.
- (4) Support the work to encourage Playworkers into Trade union membership.
- (5) Support the proposal for Playworkers to be incorporated on to the JNC for Youth and Community workers and covered by these National Terms and conditions.
- (6) Support the development of plans to rebuild and reinvest in a professional Play service for Britain.

## Resolution 18

### Black Youth Unemployment

- (1) Half UK's young Black men are out of work. This was the headline on the front page of the Guardian Saturday 10 March 2012. If you are White you have more chance of becoming employed, if you are Black you have less chance of being employed. This claim has continued with the Department of Work and Pensions in January 2014 declaring that BAEM communities (Black, Asian & Ethnic Minority) unemployment was 12% while it was 6% for White communities.
- (2) For those who fight for justice and equality this comes as no surprise. It is obviously a problem as authorities and organisations don't talk about it because if they did they would have to act. The Conservative led Coalition Government fails to recognise this as a national crisis even though all data, facts and statistics available clearly show that Black young people are more than twice as likely to be unemployed than their white counterparts.

## Implementation

## Implementation

Strong support was given by the GS to London campaigners on this issue following a comprehensively supported letter in The Guardian.

## Implementation

The General Secretary has highlighted this issue in a number of articles in the national press.

## Resolution 18 (continued)

- (3) There are more than three quarters of a million young people unemployed in the UK. It is time to act. We cannot stand by and watch the potential of thousands condemned to the scrap heap. Shame on this Conservative led Coalition Government if it is prepared to watch young black people languish in misery and no hope ... a generation condemned to a future of worklessness!
- (4) We must take action now to stop the indefensible levels of unemployment of young black people.
- (5) We call on the GFTU in partnership with affiliates to:
  - To demand that the Government urgently sets up a Taskforce made up of Community Representatives, Trade Union Leaders, Faith Leaders, to consult with young black people, voluntary sector, community and faith organisations, etc to produce recommendations to address the alarmingly high unemployment rates.
  - Urge the Trade Union movement to come together to organise a National Conference, made up of young people, Politicians, Police, Public Sector Leaders, Youth Forums, Business Leaders, etc, to urgently consider and develop strategies to create employment opportunities for all young people.
  - Lobby MPs and Local Councillors to develop local strategies with the private and public sectors to urgently address the problem of high employment rates of all young people with a particular focus on tackling the disproportionate impact of unemployment of Black and Asian young people.

## Resolution 19

### Employment Rights & Trade Union Freedoms

- (1) Conference is appalled at the continuing and sustained attack on collective and individual employment rights and trade union freedoms by the present government.
- (2) This has included:
  - Increasing the qualification period to claim unfair dismissal
  - Undermining the health and safety protection for workers
  - Introducing fees for employment tribunals
  - Attacks on trade union facility time, check off and collective bargaining in the public sector
  - Reducing working rights for people in SMEs
  - Cutting the consultation period for large scale redundancies
  - Limiting the amount of compensation employees can receive for unfair dismissal
  - Weakening TUPE legislation that protects employees transferred from one employer to another.
- (3) In addition Conference deplores the fact that UK law imposes obligations on trade unions in relation to dispute and strike ballots that are unprecedented in Europe and that the law seeks to frustrate trade unions on technical grounds from their right to take collective action rather than to provide a framework for assessing whether there is genuine worker support for the proposed action.
- (4) The restrictions in trade union activity in the UK are amongst the most severe in the developed world and stand in breach of ILO conventions.
- (5) Conference also deplores the increasing use of the courts by employers to prevent legal industrial action by union members who have voted

## Implementation

## Implementation

Extensive campaigning throughout the Movement did not prevent the Trade Union Act from reaching the statute books.

The GFTU has supported all those politicians and organisations seeking a repeal of the Act and a positive new framework of employment and trade union legislation.

The General Secretary has responded to a number of consultation documents.

The GFTU is supporting an extensive section of its new education programme on trade unions and the law.

## Resolution 19 (continued)

overwhelmingly in favour of industrial action to defend pay, jobs, working conditions and health and safety only for the courts to rule out the action on minor technical grounds.

- (6) Conference calls upon the GFTU to vigorously campaign to promote and protect workers rights and trade union freedoms and work with other trade union based campaigns aimed at establishing a level playing field of collective and individual employment rights, restoring workers' rights in the UK and abolishing anti trade union laws.

## Resolution 20

### Global Trade Agreements

- (1) The GFTU is extremely concerned about Global Trade Agreements including the proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) free trade treaty, a wide-ranging trade deal giving unprecedented power and influence to transnational corporations that would become the benchmark for all future trade agreements, currently being negotiated between the EU and the USA and recognises the threat posed. While there may be economic benefits in reducing trade tariffs and reviewing regulation for certain industrial sectors, Congress believes that the primary purpose of TTIP and other Trade Agreements is to extend corporate investor rights.
- (2) A key element of the TTIP is the introduction of the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) clause, which would act as a tribunal/arbitration. The ISDS could see millions of pounds paid out to those big private sector corporations should NHS services be brought back into the public sector in the future.
- (3) As with all trade agreements, TTIP is being negotiated mainly in secret. The current negotiations lack transparency and proper democratic oversight. TTIP would:
  - a) allow corporations to sue sovereign states, elected governments and other authorities legislating in the public interest where this curtails their ability to maximise their profits, by recourse to an Investor-State Dispute Settlement mechanism;
  - b) threaten the future of our NHS and other key public services;
  - c) risk job losses, despite unsubstantiated claims to the contrary;
  - d) potentially undermine labour standards, pay, conditions and trade union rights as the US refuses to ratify core ILO conventions and operates anti-union "right to work" policies in half of its states;
  - e) reverse years of European progress on environmental standards, food safety and control of dangerous chemicals, given US refusal to accept stricter EU regulation of substances long banned in the EU; and
  - f) deprive EU member states of billions of pounds in lost tariff revenue.
- (5) Key concerns are:
  - i) the threat to our National Health Service and sections of the public sector that may be opened up to the private sector leaving a future Labour government with no legal right to take back into public ownership (including previously publicly owned transport and utilities) and that could lead to a far more widespread fragmentation of NHS services, putting them into the hands of big private sector corporations;
  - ii) the quasi-judicial process on the Investor-State Dispute Settlement under which multinational corporations may sue, in secret courts, nation states whose laws or actions are deemed incompatible with free trade;
  - iii) opening up European markets to US Frankenstein foods – hormone enriched beef, chlorinated poultry and genetically modified cereals and salmon;

## Implementation

## Implementation

The signing up by the EU Parliaments Trade Committee at the end of May to the key elements of the ISDS was strongly opposed by the GS and those Labour MEPs who supported this were written to criticizing their action.

The referendum and its result, together with the US Presidential election result significantly reshaped the ground on which this debate was based.

## Resolution 20 (continued)

- iv) the mutual recognition of regulatory standards which will lead to a race to the bottom and the creation of a Transatlantic Regulatory Council which will give privileged access to multinational corporations; and
  - v) the impact on creators' intellectual property rights.
- (6) The GFTU notes that free trade agreements rarely, if ever, benefit working people and are pushed by corporations who use them as a means to maximise profits and further their own interests.
- (7) The idea of transatlantic trade may well be supported by those that would profit from it, but for our health services based on values, principles and sustainability it could be a financial disaster, adding another nail in the NHS coffin. Unions and other organisations have been campaigning to exempt the NHS from the negotiations and Congress now calls on the General Council to keep the pressure on and raise the profile of the calamitous affects the TTIP could have on the NHS.
- (8) The GFTU remains unconvinced by official claims of job creation arising out of TTIP and other Trade Agreements and considers that the dangers to public services, workers' rights and environmental standards outweigh any potential benefits.
- (9) The GFTU remains unconvinced about the likelihood of a binding labour rights chapter based on ILO Core Conventions.
- (10) The GFTU has similar concerns over current negotiations for the proposed Trade in Services Agreement (TISA) and the Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA) with Canada and the US-Pacific Rim Agreement (TPP).
- (11) The GFTU believes that on the current path we will be presented with a fait accompli in the form of an inadequate, unacceptable trade agreements that we have had no chance of influencing or amending and where time will make it difficult to mobilise opposition.
- (12) This Conference resolves that the Executive Committee should:
- 1) oppose Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanisms and a ratchet clause;
  - 2) call for the exclusion of all public services, including education and health, public procurement, public utilities and public transport (whether in public or private ownership) from the negotiations;
  - 3) demand no levelling down in relation to consumer, employment rights or environmental protection;
  - 4) insist on genuine consultation with civil society organisations, including trade unions;
  - 5) work with like-minded organisations, including the TUC, ETUC and other Unions, in opposing all detrimental aspects of these new generation of Free Trade Agreements and in campaigning for alternative EU trade and investment policies; and
  - 6) welcome the decision of the EU Foreign Affairs Council on Trade to exclude the audio-visual sector from the initial TTIP agenda, and lobby the UK government to oppose its future inclusion, in order to preserve the European Cultural Exception and the unique national nature of arts and entertainment activity within Europe.
- (13) The GFTU should now call for the TTIP negotiations to be halted and adopt a clear position of outright opposition to TTIP, and the other trade agreements currently being negotiated, including CETA and TISA whilst continuing to monitor progress and press for improvements to promote decent jobs and growth and safeguard labour, consumer, environmental and health and safety standards through lobbying, campaigning and negotiating, in alliance with Unions, the ETUC, the AFLCIO and campaigning groups such as the Campaign for Trade Union Freedom.

## Implementation



## Resolution 20 (continued)

(14) Congress agrees that all pending and future trade agreements entered into by the EU should be subject to a vigorous and transparent regime of scrutiny and consultation, ensuring that they are of benefit and acceptable to the millions of people affected by their content, in all countries covered by the agreement.

## Resolution 21

### Support UK Manufacturing

- (1) The GFTU believes that it is imperative that UK manufacturing is supported in order that there can be no over-reliance on financial services and the service sector ever again.
- (2) Conference believes that the decline of UK manufacturing must be reversed through an interventionist industrial and manufacturing policy to drive the economy forward – which the current coalition government is failing to do.  
The ConDem coalition government's growth strategy and manufacturing policy has failed to materialise.
- (3) Conference also notes the support given to German manufacturing companies by their federal and national governments with the government, unions and employers working together – which has protected German manufacturing from the worst of the economic crisis and defended their strategically important manufacturing companies.
- (4) Conference therefore calls for the GFTU to campaign to support and defend UK manufacturing.
- (5) Including support for:
  - A strategic Investment Bank where manufacturing companies including SMEs have easy access to investment funding at an affordable rate. This will facilitate loans at competitive rates to enable SMEs to increase capital investment in new machinery, technology and equipment.
  - The use of government procurement opportunities to ensure goods and services purchased are manufactured or produced in the UK by UK based companies.
  - The establishment of a Takeover Commission to ensure that workers and their representatives to be informed and consulted on the business and financing plan of any takeover prior to the acquisition. Through their trade unions, workers should have the right, equivalent to that of pension fund trustees, to seek fair compensation and protection should substantially greater levels of leverage be part of a takeover.
  - Support for a new skills strategy based on skilled apprenticeships, providing long term, skilled and well paid employment.
  - Environmental considerations can only fairly be considered on a global basis but they must form part of any sustainable industrial policy in the future and must include the maximisation of opportunity that the low carbon revolution provides whilst creating a level playing field to deliver security and fair pricing for energy. The structure of "green taxes" must be such so as not to stifle manufacturing growth or export it to parts of the world where such taxes do not exist, but to create a sustainable industrial strategy which embraces equity and viable employment.
- (6) Conference calls for more government action and less rhetoric on boosting the UK's manufacturing sector. Without action now the threat to the future of manufacturing in the UK is real. The current 12% contribution to GDP does not represent a balanced economy which economists and politicians alike agree is what the UK needs.

## Implementation

## Implementation

The GFTU has constantly prioritized these policies as central to its work.

## Resolution 22

### UK Equal Rights Framework

- (1) Conference condemns the ConDem Government for repealing sections of the Equality Act 2010 aimed at protecting workers from discrimination and harassment and attacking institutions such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). Alongside many other attacks on employment rights, widespread use of zero hours contracts, attacks on collective bargaining, reducing access to justice by implementing fees for employment tribunals, conference believes the current Government is systematically dismantling the equal rights framework within the UK.
- (2) Conference believes charging a fee for registering a claim at a tribunal undoubtedly deters the lowest paid workers and those who are unemployed as a consequence of dismissal from registering a claim. To charge people for exercising a statutory right is an attack on equality, is unacceptable and is, in reality a denial of access to justice. In the first year on the Tribunal fees regime, applications to the Employment Tribunal was down 79% compared to the previous 12 months.
- (3) The questionnaire procedure has played a key role in enabling union members to evaluate whether they should bring a claim of discrimination, and has ensured employers disclose important information relating to company procedures and policies.
- (4) Conference welcomes the development of Union equality reps. Conference believes that Union equality reps need a framework of support to ensure that they are supported in the work that they do. We should work hard to develop regional and national networks of Union Equality Reps.
- (5) Conference believes that we must work hard to achieve statutory recognition for Union Equality Representatives. We must continue to press the case with the current Government as well as ensure statutory recognition is a priority commitment for the next Labour government.
- (6) Conference calls on the GFTU to campaign for employment rights from day one, continue to oppose the use of Zero hour contract by employers, abolition of fees for employment tribunals and for collective rights to organise and negotiate through a trade union for better pay, terms and conditions and lobby the next Labour Government to make them unlawful.
- (7) Conference resolves to work with affiliates to develop a charter for equal rights, employment rights and collective bargaining in order to rebuild our machinery for equality.

## Implementation

## Resolution 23

### Women in Manufacturing, Engineering & Science

- (1) Conference is deeply concerned at the ongoing occupational and job segregation existing in manufacturing. Women make up just under a quarter of the UK manufacturing workforce, as compared with nearly half of the total UK workforce.
- (2) Although women play a key role in UK manufacturing sectors such as the food, drink and clothing sectors, the segregation is stark in science, engineering and technology (SET) with just one in twenty working women and one in three men, employed in any SET occupation. Among younger workers, women account for just 3 per cent of apprenticeships in engineering but dominate in low paid sectors.
- (3) Many women face problems with up-skilling, remain in lower grades and too few are employed in the management and research functions or are SET students and graduates resulting in loss of valuable skills.

## Implementation

This policy was in fact taken up by a number of organisations and media outlets over the two year period and many University and some prestigious organisations such as the Royal Society of Engineers took the matter forward.

## Resolution 23 (continued)

- (4) Conference supports initiatives such as those to get more young women to consider a career in engineering and the science sectors.
- (5) There is a lack of information on issues facing women in manufacturing, including working patterns and health concerns as recent research has warned and PPE is often inappropriate and inadequate for women working in manufacturing.
- (6) Conference therefore calls on the GFTU Executive and Affiliates to:
  - share best practice between unions and support shop stewards and union reps in tackling women's under-representation and ending job segregation within manufacturing;
  - support initiatives to get more women into engineering and science apprenticeships;
  - urge the government to fund decent and well paid apprenticeships leading to permanent employment, including positive action for young women;
  - work with unions to identify issues that concern women in manufacturing;
  - support affiliates in urging their governments for real investment in this industry, to promote manufacturing apprenticeships among women and lift barriers facing women;
  - insist that manufacturing companies ensure that procured components are not produced in sweatshop conditions or where there is abuse of migrant women or men workers.

## Implementation

## Resolution 24

### Youth Service

- (1) This Conference continues to be opposed to the unfair and unnecessary attacks on The GS wrote letters to every MP and member of the House of Lords on behalf of the campaign and drafted the Young People and Youth Work Bill with Unite member Andy Driver and former director of the National Youth Agency Tom Wylie. A special meeting of Chooseyouth was held on June 4th and a renewed episode of concerted campaigning ensued. our public services. It notes with utter dismay the consequence of this in the near ruin of the Youth Service in Britain.
- (2) The historic role of youth work as an educational service offering personal and social development to young people outside school and work and offering an entirely unique space for young people to grow and develop, as well as for preventative work to be undertaken is under serious threat. The service has experienced an ideologically driven break up of youth work and the youth services. It is undisputed that the Youth Service in England is the first public service to actually disappear as a consequence of the austerity funding cuts to local authorities by the current Tory Government.
- (3) Fantastic youth work now only exists in isolated fragments. The architecture of the post war settlement of local authorities working in partnership with the voluntary sector to provide professionally qualified workers and supported volunteers to work with and for young people to expand their horizons and develop citizenship and collective responsibility has gone. No local authority in England has a Youth Service left. Thousands of youth centres have closed.
- (4) This conference calls upon the GFTU and affiliate organisations to:
  1. Continue to actively support the Choose Youth Campaign, the unprecedented alliance of youth organisations and Trade unions to defend youth services and Youth workers jobs underpinned

## Implementation

## Resolution 24

by professional national Terms and Conditions (JNC for Youth and Community workers)

2. Endorse the recent Choose Youth Statement and inform all affiliate organisations of its content
3. Support the Votes at 16 campaign along with a massive voter registration campaign specifically targeting young people
4. Campaign for a rebuilt and publically funded youth service staffed by professionally qualified JNC youth workers with their job title protected in statute and a licence to practise scheme
- (5) Such an investment and rebuilding of a youth service will enable young people to lead a renewed sense of commitment to a social and economic future that values our young people first and foremost."

## Implementation

The GS wrote letters to every MP and member of the House of Lords on behalf of the campaign and drafted the Young People and Youth Work Bill with Unite member Andy Driver and former director of the National Youth Agency Tom Wylie. A special meeting of Chooseyouth was held on June 4th and a renewed episode of concerted campaigning ensued.

*Images by Theresa Easton,  
Artist Union of England*



1. The GFTU has transferred its investment portfolio from Credit Suisse to two investment managers, Brook MacDonald and City Asset Management chosen after tender. The performance has improved in line with general improvements in equity markets. Performance reporting arrangements have improved.
2. The accounts of the General Federation of Trade Unions for 2015 and 2016 have been approved by the Executive Committee.
3. The accounts of the Pensions Scheme have been prepared and will be considered by the Trustees at their next meeting.
4. The accounts of the Educational Trust have been prepared and will be considered by the Trustees at their next meeting.
5. The accounts of the GFTU ET Trading Company and Albion Education and Training Ltd will be considered at their next meeting.
6. A new professionally organised finance team has been organised which in addition to strengthening the GFTU's own financial management enables us to provide financial administration, accounting and auditing to other partners and trade unions. Already this facility has been taken up under service level agreements by three other parties.
7. New financial procedures, systems and policies have been adopted throughout.
8. A Finance and General Purposes sub-committee of the Executive Committee monitors the finances in detail between EC meetings and takes necessary external professional advice..
9. Management accounts are produced monthly, key performance indicator records are monitored bi-weekly, budgets are set and performance against budget is assessed monthly.
10. The Executive Committee has agreed to focus investment plans and due diligence at this stage on the expansion of the Quorn Grange site. This plan includes new houses for rent, a new double sized nursery facility, and 24 new rooms for the hotel.
11. Three business plans for each element of the plan have been considered by the EC and subjected to external professional scrutiny. A valuation of the planned project has been obtained, a cash flow projection and a new build time line.
12. Planning permission for the project was granted in February 2017.
13. Affiliates are encouraged to make the most and best possible use of Quorn Grange Hotel.
14. The GFTU's strategy has been to ask the Educational Trust to become more self-sufficient and reliant and to consider new ways of raising revenues consistent with our objectives and ethics. A range of new services with commission and benefit to the Trust have consequently been introduced alongside the capacity to run union financial work and training at cost.
15. We have returned a better financial picture over the last two years than for some time.
16. The GFTU will be seeking to generate capital for its new build at Quorn from a combination of resources from its own reserves, commercial loans, partnership arrangements with affiliates and joint ventures. We see this as a co-operative project.



1. The GFTU Executive Committee carries out the work of the GFTU between BGCMS. A Finance and General Purposes Committee meets between EC meetings to particularly attend to financial reporting and issues. The General Secretary, President and Vice President meet, usually by telephone conference every week. Between EC meetings the General Secretary and Treasurer is responsible for the affairs of the GFTU and he produces comprehensive reports on his work and that of the staff team for the EC, F&GP, Educational Trust, Pension Scheme, and Training Company Directors. The whole finance team meetings quarterly. Progress on implementing BGCM decisions is reviewed throughout the year. A verbatim record of the BGCM 2015 is available to delegates and minutes of EC meetings are available on request.
2. The EC implemented the decision to have one member from every union with one vote on the EC. Substitute delegates are also permitted. In addition the EC agreed to elect four equalities seats for this period of office.
3. Following the BGCM in 2015 two major conferences for affiliates were convened, one focussing on shared services and one on all elements of union building from organising to education, personnel management to, organisational change. These proved very popular and instructive and another major follow up event is planned in February 2018.
4. Underpinning the work of the EC has been the intention to find a long term financial solution for the GFTU and create sustainable income. This has run alongside the development of new services to affiliates, the completion of an extensive review of education and the launch of a new education programme and new income generating ideas within the Educational Trust. The EC hopes that the affiliates will continue to support these initiatives.
5. A small online ethical shop has been created to generate income.
6. A special edition of the global progressive magazine New Internationalist was arranged in conjunction with the GFTU on world trade unionism. This led to fruitful discussions about future joint working in education and publishing. The Trust has agreed to establish with New Internationalist a new international publishing house for trade unions – Workable Books.
7. Workable Books will be launched in the autumn of 2017 and its first three publications will be a book about trade union education, a book of songs of Dave Rogers, and a book of plays about trade unions.
8. The 2015 summit requested that the EC find new ways of support affiliates recognising that a pick and mix approach would be best. The results of this were published in an interim report and will be further detailed at the BGCM.
9. The summit also asked the EC to present a set of options for legal services for affiliates and this will also be presented to the BGCM.
10. A number of dominant themes have underpinned the GFTU's work: the need to re engage young workers with the trade union movement, the need to create a modern trade union education curriculum and ways of learning, the need to preserve labour movement history and to re-invigorate trade union campaigning, organising and education with arts and culture.
11. Providing the best facilities we can at Quorn Grange for affiliates' in conference or training or relaxation is an important part of our work and we remind all affiliates that our discounts at the hotel are all available at discount to all members.



12. We play a vital role in assisting new unions in forming and growing and we play a role too in helping experienced unions out when there are difficulties. There is no question too big or small that we cannot be asked to consider, the GFTU is extremely keen to help out at any level.
13. Specialist officers in unions and General Secretaries themselves need all the support they can get and we are pleased that our informal forums for these groups have proved beneficial.
14. In order to develop deeper thinking about the future and organisation of trade union education we have provided a forum for education officers and those interested in transforming the curriculum
15. Our trade union management development programme and work with universities and the Institute of Leadership and Management has strengthened our capacity to make unions better managed organisations with better managers in them.

*Above right: Newly refurbished lounge and bar area at Quorn*

*Photo courtesy of Ade Marsh Photography*



*Above: Rebuilding Britain's manufacturing key is key priority for the future*

16. We strongly believe in national collective bargaining and in the professionally organised workplace with sound relationships between employers and organised unions. We have welcomed working with ACAS more closely this year to assist the development of the modern workplace.
17. We believe that unions deserve the best professional advice on everything from investments to ICT and have spent time making arrangements with companies keen to bring high level professional expertise to bear economically on the development of our Movement.
18. The world of work for too many is a terrible place. The hard end of victimisation at work, zero hours contracts, redundancy, factory and service closures are nothing new to us and we have intervened and lent a hand where requested in some very difficult circumstances. We put the difficulties we see in a context and campaign for policy changes also. We consistently lend our support to trade unionists overseas and worthy causes.
19. We have established some new and important traditions. Our TUC social is now the biggest and best at Congress and we find a great way there of mixing some business with a lot of camaraderie and pleasure. Our Next Generation Festival is an established an essential source of inspiration for the next generation of trade union leaders. Our annual union building conference or summit really does get people thinking and working in new ways together. Our new group of academic supporters, so keen to support our unions, can undertake research, education and support in an important way.
20. The EC agreed a set of priorities for its term of office and genuinely believes that it has been able to make real progress under each priority area as follows, a summary note on progress under each priority is given in italics:

**Provide full support where required by affiliates in campaigning and organising and recruitment.**

*Individual requests from affiliates responded to extensive discussions on these items with new training materials at the summit and union building conference.*

**Organise a successful visit to Greece for younger EC members.**

*Undertaken, report of visit under International Section.*

**On achievement of planning permission proceed with a successful new build at Quorn.**

*Planning permission agreed later than anticipated through no fault of GFTU.*

**Identify new investment opportunities, maintain value of existing investments.**

*Value of investments increased, new investments organised.*

**Hold discussions with all affiliates and potential affiliates concerning the shared and new services proposals from the EC.**

*Extensive discussions held at summit and subsequently.*

**Recruit four new affiliates.**

*Five new affiliates recruited!*

**Establish new Service Level Agreements for Customised Training.**

*This was achieved.*

**Organise a successful Youth Festival.**

*Both Youth festivals were highly regarded.*

**Organise a successful Arts and Culture Event.**

*This was considered a very successful event.*

**Keep Quorn Grange Hotel on budget.**

*There was some slippage and a difficult year was experienced in 2016. Marketing sales, business planning, organisational management and other issues were subsequently attended to.*

**Organise a successful trade union organising event.**

*This was considered to be an extremely successful event.*

**Produce a new song CD and fundraising event.**

*This was not achieved.*

**Fund an arts and cultural worker.**

*A producer for our arts and cultural festival has been appointed.*

**Assist successful publication of New Internationalist on trade unions.**

*A very successful edition was produced on trade unions.*

**Introduce a new extensive face to face and online education curriculum.**

*This has been achieved our biggest and most extensive programme has been launched.*

**Build on partnerships with academics and institutions and partners.**

*Great successes have been achieved and these are reported on in the Education Trust report.*

**Hold successful meetings with union specialist officers for finance, IT, education, etc and sustain the General Secretary's group.**

*Future dates planned and successful meetings held.*

**Build the trade union education forum as the forum for discussion between educators. From February onwards.**

*Very successful meetings held.*

**Create a new online ethical shop through New Internationalist – launch TUC.**

*Launched September 2016.*

**Create a new international trade union publishing house imprint through New Internationalist.**

*To be launched September 2017, titles agreed, databasing internationally for promotional work agreed.*

**Find long term sustainable future for the Pensions Trust.**

*An improved position has taken us a long way in this direction.*

**Raise GFTU's profile.**

*Wider press coverage has been achieved, a strenuous marketing strategy for the hotel and GFTU and education programme are in place and our TUC presence amongst unions has been noted.*

**Make a considered, quality contribution to the EU referendum debate.**

*Three seminars were organised with Keele University representing all shades of opinion.*

**Establish GFTU Credit Union.**

*This has not yet been achieved.*

**Review BGCM policy implementation. Throughout.**

*See report on implementation.*

**Extend GFTU services and open new income streams.**

*This has been achieved.*

**Progress commitment to training health and safety trainers in Vietnamese trade unions.**

*Significant progress made.*

**Progress exploration of marketing a new funding stream through a workers' beer and wine.**

*A new Federation Beer should be launched soon, ongoing discussions concerning a GFTU wine.*

*Below: Anne Pettifor*





# QUORN GRANGE HOTEL

We have invested heavily in our hotel. We do not owe a penny on it, though may have to take loans if we proceed with the new build. All rooms have been refurbished, the bar and lounge area has been refurbished. We want our guests and our union members to have the very best food, rooms, and surroundings. The hotel generously gift aids the GFTU Educational Trust.

The value of the hotel has increased since our ownership began and of course the approach to staffing has been transformed, no more agency staff, no more zero hours contract the living wage, union recognition, good terms and conditions and a new pension scheme.

The hotel has been indispensable to many affiliates and saved them money and given them a home from home as it were. We are delighted that 30 unions use the building but there is no room for complacency. Please use your hotel encourage members to go there for family events and benefit from our discounts.

*Photos courtesy of  
Ade Marsh Photography*



1. This has been an extremely busy two years for the Trustees.
2. Due to its merger with IndustriALL and move of a UK based central office location, one of the employers sections of the scheme, the International Garment and Leather Workers Federation had to be wound up by virtue of Section 75 regulations and passed to the Pension Protection Fund. Three years of complex work on this transfer were completed in 2016.
3. The pension scheme remains with two sections, the GFTU and the PCS (former AMO) sections.
4. The Executive Committee of the GFTU having considered all aspects of the finances as carefully as it could, along with the Trustees, agreed to close the scheme to future accrual.
5. The Executive Committee was also keen to ensure that pensioners and actives in the two sections were able to propose their own method of election of Trustees and this process was eventually commenced.
6. Revised, consolidated handbooks and deed for the scheme were agreed.
7. The triennial valuation was conducted over this period and a satisfactory outcome which identified a reduced deficit in the GFTU Section and a shorter repayment period was agreed.
8. New administrative systems were introduced and communication with pensioners and relevant updating work were undertaken.
9. Tenders for actuarial assistance were conducted and Mercer and Co. were reappointed.
10. Tenders for accountancy work with the scheme were undertaken and Sturgess Hutchinson were appointed.
11. Tenders were undertaken for financial investments and following considerable analysis and discussion and a commissioned report, Legal and General Investment Managers were reappointed with a differently constructed portfolio investments. Performance on investments has been strong.
12. Pensions payroll and administration was taken back fully in house following a short period of staff transition in 2015.
13. A new defined contribution pension scheme was opened internally for staff at the hotel and nursery and within the GFTU. This is also administered fully by our finance team.



1. Two of the GFTU's affiliates, CCISU and Nautilus International are internationally constructed unions. We literally have internationalism at our centre.
2. In addition the EC agreed four years ago to take international issues on every agenda and the Trust supports the organisation of international study visits and we maintain throughout each year a steady flow of contacts with overseas trade union organisations and host several delegations. We have many years of successful partnership working with trade union organisations in Europe and have completed several projects on organising in Aerospace and looking at collective bargaining and HR Issues with other union centres.
3. **ESNA – Enquentro Sindical Neustra Americas**
  - 3.1 This is the education and research and support organisation for trade unions in Latin America. We have built good relations with them primarily to support our development of new techniques in trade union education.
  - 3.2 We were able to arrange two visits for ESNA colleagues to meet with affiliates and partners. Colleagues from Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina visit TSSA, Marjohns Univeristy, the MU, PFA, RMT, UNISON, Unite, and other affiliates to forge bilateral relations.
  - 3.3 In November 2016 ESNA attended our Union Building Conference and we were able to meet with FORMAC to consider funding applications for a conference on women workers in manufacturing in Central America. An application has been submitted.
  - 3.4 Bro. Bert Schouwenberg International Officer of the GMB was also able to represent the GFTU at the International Conference of ESNA in Uruguay and produced a written report.
4. **Greece**
  - 4.1 The EC was greatly concerned about the deteriorating situation in Greece, a situation that currently shows no sign of let up, and also greatly impressed by information it had received about the fortitude of trade unions in the country and the establishment by young workers there of new unions. It consequently agreed to support a small delegation to Greece comprising of Sarah Woolley Bakers, Dami Benbow Educational Trust Trustee, Bindu Paul, Musicians' Union and Deanne Ferguson, GMB. Their report follows:





## GFTU Educational Visit to Athens January 2016

*Delegates Bindu Paul, Dami Benbow, Deanne Ferguson, Sarah Woolley*

### Brief Background

Greece entered the European Union in 1980 as one of the first ten countries and entered the Euro in 2002. The vision being; a united Europe, people prospering and educated to continue that way. When Greece entered the Euro though lives were not facilitated and the quality of life actually went down though belonging to Europe was a good tool to negotiate and seen as a great asset.

Greece's financial crisis has been building up since 2009 – since then there has been extreme austerity plans, several Eurozone rescue packages/loans and many protests often violent against austerity laws.

In 2014 the radical Left Syriza coalition (The Coalition of the Radical Left) won the European election. It is the largest party in the Hellenic Parliament; with party chairman Alexis Tsipras serving as Prime Minister of Greece from 26 January 2015 to 20 August 2015 and from 21 September 2015 to Present.

In 2015 Greece and its creditors agreed to a third bailout after blackmail tactics were used against them, imposing further spending cuts on the country to avoid bankruptcy and exit from the Eurozone

After the blackmail Europe is seen by many in Greece and other countries as a totally undemocratic with a criminal central bank and commission. They should have been guarantying the Treaties but instead they are acting as guarantors and getting money

The GFTU delegation visit to Athens comes at a time when its country is broken. During our visit we hear about the impact the debt is having on the Greeks and in addition we see what help is being done for the increasing Syrian refugees.

*Photos courtesy of Bindu Paul and Sarah Woolley*

## Solidarity Piraeus

We first visited and witnessed the great efforts of Solidarity Piraeus, a small charity that helps the homeless. They have been operating for over three years and work around four times a week - offering food to the homeless, unemployed and the refugees. They have over 200 volunteers, which is a real help especially with the influx of refugees. Over 100 people will arrive for food and clothes every day. They operate in 4 different centres, they don't just offer food and clothes but they also have an education programme teaching French and English to adults, for children the lessons cover all subjects including geography and history and they especially help children with learning difficulties or who are struggling at school.

The volunteers only work 4 hours a week and don't get paid, they do however get to take a selection of food goods home with them twice a month as payment for the work that they do or often they will give to others.

The food is donated by supermarkets and are mainly dry goods though while we were there they had a large delivery of fresh fish to hand out and is collected by volunteers; the clothes are donated by the public and people can pay donations to the charity as one offs or more regularly .

The unemployed get free health care and often medical professionals will volunteer their time to help, the unemployed have to show a card so that they can get free medicine. These cards do not provide eye care for free though this is subsidised for unemployed people which makes it inaccessible to most.

They also send help parcels to the islands who are dealing with the refugees so they can clean themselves. We were told that most refugees want to leave Greece because of the financial problems they are facing and the fact Greece can't bear the numbers that are arriving, but Germany wants Greece to keep the refugees as no one else wants to take responsibility for them

The volunteers we spoke to had been doing the work for over three years and could not see them stopping any time soon. The project now needs over 200 regular volunteers to keep up with the demand from the refugees as word of mouth around Piraeus and especially down at the port where many refugees are arriving is meaning more and more people are using the services.



## Zoe Konstantopoulou

Zoe is a human rights lawyer and politician of the political party Syriza being elected as an MP in 2012 and 2015. She was formally the speaker of the Hellenic Parliament. From the outset it was apparent that Zoe wanted us to have an accurate and clear view of what was happening in Greece as she was well aware that what is reported in our press is not an accurate picture of what is and has been going on.

### Corruption and Transparency

Before she was elected as the speaker for the parliament her role was in "Corruption and Transparency". Her main aim was to audit the debt crisis to get the truth about what had occurred. A committee was then formed in April after she became the speaker and had the power to deal with it by gaining proper access to the debt books of Greece. The committee consisted of representatives from several different countries and an expert from the UN on Debt and Human Rights. It was not an easy process people thought that as they had voted Zoe in they would get leniency on corruption but it wasn't the case and Zoe had a very turbulent and difficult 6 months trying to collect evidence for the committee. They found it particularly difficult to get feedback from the Greek banks, they were reluctant to give figures and invoked the banking secrecy clause rather than give up any information!

### Preliminary Report: The Truth Committee on Public Debt

After a 4 month period of negotiating, a preliminary report was published in June 2015. There was an aspiration to look into the rest of the auditing and show exactly how the debt was created ( Doug has a copy)

#### Conclusion 1

Essentially they disproved the public myth that Greece got their point of crisis by living beyond its means. The investigation showed that actually public spending was below average in Europe, defence spending however was over the European average. Here they see the most corruption – tanks without bullets, submarines without torpedoes and defective armour - high profit for corrupt officials but useless to the state

#### Conclusion 2

Since 2010 the IMF had knowledge that the Greek debt was unsustainable. With this knowledge they should not have been able to lend and so that is why they concealed the fact that they knew. They

denied they had copies of the files that showed this. The problem here was not about the freedom of information but the lack of institutionalised transparency.

For example the statute of limitation for criminal cases 20-25 years for a citizen however for a government official it's the 2nd regular term after they have left office (which cant be less than 4 months but could be as little as 1.5 years) meaning hundreds of files are submitted to parliament every 2 years with no procedure to look at them leading to institutional immunity for government officials!

### So why did this happen?

In short the private bond holders were rescued (especially banks) and not Greece. The rescue package of 2010 (first loan) was to offer a safe emergency exit to private bond holders. The report highlights that the IMF are liable for what happened to Greece and although the preliminary report was sent out to all members of the EU no one put it to any use!

In 2015 Greece took another loan of 85 billion Euros in addition to the 325 billion Euros they received before. They are now in 410 billion Euros in debt. In context, that means that every baby born will owe 41,000 Euros when they are born!!

Extreme austerity measures have cut pensions to 44.4% below the poverty line. The Social Security Bill means that self-employed professionals will be paying 80/90% in taxes and fees and going forward pensions will drop to a flat rate of 384 Euros for everyone which is reckless and dangerous at best when the poverty line sits at 780 euros!!!

Zoe was removed from being speaker of Parliament as she and 40 other SYRIZA MPs voted against the measures and the group have been bullied and harassed since! The other MPs backed down and chose themselves over their constituents which led them to stay in power. Zoe told us for a normal person serving a position of power is like serving a prison sentence. Those still there now are in charge of privatising what's left of Greece's services for example Pireaus Port.

The minister of maritime policy was seen as the left of the left of SYRIZA but he is now tendering for the sale of the port. By having a left wing government do the EU's dirty work it's showing the country there is no alternative which has helped in the disillusion of the people of Greece who saw SYRIZA as a beacon of hope that completely u-turned and betrayed them. They do not understand what has gone on behind the scenes to cause it.

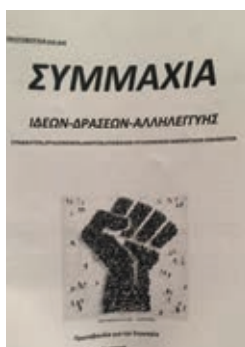
Zoe told us Greece is not the first country to be blackmailed by the European Central Bank;

In Cyprus March 2013 they closed the banks and within 10 days had changed the Parliamentary vote. In Greece they closed the banks and blackmailed the government.

In her opinion France and Germany are trying to pull away from the Treaties for their own gain.

She said what was happening to Greece was not a fatality but if there had been more people ready to fight things would be different now – something other countries need to be prepared for!

Photos courtesy of Bindu Paul and Sarah Woolley





Politics can be done differently you don't have to just repeat bad politics!

Zoe is part of a group called European Level Initiatives who are actively looking into alternatives for Europe and want to incorporate and include everyone who wants to be involved in a better alternative Europe.

## Refugee Crisis

There has been a refugee scheme since the summer of 2015. Greece is the first country refugees get to with the Eurozone. This is causing major problems, and the refugees are just seen as burdens not people in trouble. There is no talk about the war being the cause of the problem or discussion around disarmament. There is an increase of far right groups across Europe (most notably – Golden Dawn) with a number of vicious attacks on refugees and the people trying to help them. But on the flip side there has been some great compassion from the left with Greeks opening their homes to refugees despite in a crisis themselves which is helping to slowly reform the mentality.

The government is not tabling any kind of thorough or viable proposal with the refugee issue just simply accepting people and making no Euros from it – in the long run Greece will be left to ruin to save the rest of the EU from dealing with the crisis. The EU want to turn the islands of Greece – their main source of income via tourists – into refugee islands in order to release the 'burden' elsewhere.

Zoe told us of how in Denmark valuables are being taken off refugees upon entering as payment for them! Hitler would be proud.

Photos courtesy of Bindu Paul and Sarah Woolley



## Social Kitchen Athens: The Other Human

We visited another project that helped homeless people – called the Social Kitchen. Before we met the founder we spoke to one of the volunteers who gave us her interpretation on what it was like living in Athens at this time.

When SYRIZA came into power, a lot of people had hope for a better life but in fact things are worse

than they were before and the problem is that people expected too much. In the work that she does, she makes sure that people have food but she believes that there needs to be more. She didn't believe that the public knew the true meaning of solidarity.

The project has been running for over 5 years and every day there will be about 10 people volunteering but there are just 5 core people that work there all over Greece though there are little groups attempting to do the same. The main aim of the project is to bring people and communities together, to work together and share good practice of how they can make change.

## Penny

Penny was a volunteer at Costas project and she spoke to us at length whilst we waited for Costas. She explained how the night before whilst we were meeting with Zoe the far right Nazi groups were having a 'celebration' across Europe. In Greece they were particularly violent as lots had travelled over from Germany in order to tell the refugees they weren't welcome. They didn't just attack the refugees but the volunteers who were trying to help and protect them too.

People are not fighting back at them as they are afraid to do so. Most do not understand the whole situation around the refugees or Greece as they are not facing it themselves.

She told us in Greece anarchists are buying buildings and filling them with people to create communities but they are having issues as there is a lot of house fighting and no direction/ goal to what they want to achieve.

According to Penny it is very difficult trying to help others without offending them but at the kitchen the visitors/ users are helping themselves. The project is not about helping someone to make you feel better it is about educating people and communities about what solidarity actually means, working in one direction with shared aims and values and being able to open people's minds to fight back at the corruption and inequality.

## Costas

We then met Costas who set up the project who told us a very interesting story of his past and how he has got to the point where he is now.

At the age of the 35 he lost his job in marketing. For 2 years after he tried to find a job but he was too old and it seemed unemployable. He lived with his mother for 6 months and only left the house to buy cigarettes which made him feel useless.

His whole life changed when he saw two children eating from a rubbish bin. People could see what they were doing but just ignore what was happening. This made him angry and realised that these children were worse off than him, and he wanted to do something about it.

As mentioned by the volunteer he had the idea of bringing people together (using food). It was like creating a family, where everyone is equal and treats each other with respect. No-one show pity, there is an

understanding that people are different but that they are all human even if they have differing views (which is the meaning behind the title of the project). It isn't a charity but a movement of solidarity, a movement of love and respect.

Some people need the food and others need the companionship but everyone wants to make their everyday life better and this can be done collectively via this project. It's based on the idea that people get involved in the actions. Everything in the house is from peoples donations that come into the centre including paying the rent and buying a car.

Costas wanted to make it very clear to us that he wasn't operating an NGO (non- governmental organisation which is funded by the government) and the issues he has with NGOs. Such as the reasons behind why people get involved with them and the government having control over it. He doesn't want to answer to anyone but do the work for people, to help people – not to be self-serving which he believes NGOs are.

He gave us an example of the difference between an NGO and the project; if John comes in for 2 packs of pasta an NGO would have to document everything who gives what to who and how much! Costas can give John 2 packs of pasta and not have to account for it to anyone.

He told us lots of NGO's in Greece are corrupt and fronts for money laundering of which he wants no part of. Incidentally a perfect NGO is designed to work to cease existence but in reality most create the reoccurrence of the issue as it is their paid job and they don't want to lose it!

Unlike Solidarity Pireaus Costas does not get donations from supermarkets and is very choosy who he accepts donations from. For example Coca Cola offered 1 million Euros to help Costas continue his good work and even offered a car to be able to travel to different cities. But everything had to have Coca Cola on it to go on their promotional videos for them to use. So he not so very politely refused. Some companies come to him and if they donate with no conditions he says yes but no in cases like Coca Cola. They need to be involved and join in not just treat it like a charity.

Photo courtesy of Bindu Paul and Sarah Woolley



Costas can help everyone from anywhere including refugees and economic ones. NGOs have to see papers and will only help those who are allowed to be helped in that particular area.

Whilst we were sat in the home of Costas doubled up as an open house to those who need to use it a number of people came in to use the shower, wash their clothes and collect 'new' ones. They also provide a job search facility and give children lessons.

We then visited one of the cooking stations, similar to the one we saw in Pireaus where a team meet up with a huge cooking pot, gas burner, ingredients and utensils and make a huge pasta dish to give out to those who need it. They do this daily in different areas of Athens and serve anything from 20-200+ people at different times. Again these aren't just refugees and homeless people but also working people on low wages who may be surviving on that one cooked meal per day.

## Dr Christina Theochari

On our final day we met with Dr Christina Theochari is the Head of Environment and International Relations Department at the Athens Labour Unions Organization.

She explained to us about her involvement with the GFTU and being involved in Active Aging work a couple of years ago.

She gave us an overview of what the trade union movement was like in Greece at the moment how the structure works.

She firstly reported that 50% of young people are unemployed and as more and more people are becoming unemployed so the membership declines further, although they have seen an increase in part time and precarious workers coming into the union and being active.

## Trade Union Structure

There are three levels to the private sector Greek Trade Union Structure

Company level – members of the same profession or workplace usually production/services or small businesses. As few as 20 employees can become a union in their own right!

**Sectoral Federations** – These are different areas of work for example energy/oil

**Labour centres**- these are on the same level as sectoral federations and are based in centres of regions such as the one in Athens and is an organisation of the unions in that area

**General Federation** – The sectoral federations and labour centres belong to these

At all levels every three years there are elections for leaders of the unions president, general secretary etc and also for delegates to the next level ups congress which again has election for leaders

In the public sector there are also three levels

**Unions in ministries**  
**Sectoral in ministries**  
**Public servants**



Photo courtesy of Bindu Paul and Sarah Woolley

Both structures work together parallel to each other and have completely separate congresses to vote on leaders and the direction of the movement

When they do meet its academics who deliberate on their behalf to go to the government to negotiate and every year the situation of the Greek economy is brought up (usually September time). The subsequent papers show the situation, purpose and direction of the trade unions.

Trade unions have internal conflicts, with different opinions. The financial crisis in Greece has caused splits in the trade unions.

### Climate change

Dr Christin has been in the department of environment and pollution since 1990. She organises seminars and courses for trade unionists one of them being about the protection of environment and occupational health and safety another.

### Legislation

The environment is over regulated due to EU directives and Greece's own regulations though the inspections of the legislation are weak. There are fines but not a lot happens after them with regards to forcing compliance. Through the crisis though the environment has not been a priority so the amount of inspections has decreased.

Environmental legislation is welcome and people are sensitive to the issues (sometimes overly so) but in some cases groups try to divert issues in the name of the environment in order to push through their own agenda. For example there is a gold mine in Northern Greece – the new government promised the inhabitants of the area that the exploitation of the workers would stop. A Canadian mining company purchased the mine and indeed did stop the exploitation but now 3000 people are unemployed leading to a social disaster not an environmental one!!!

### Young People

Christina believed that the trade union movement isn't really responding to the needs of the young people and still remains traditional in their approach and ideas. They don't deny that it is an issue; they don't do much about it. There is no strategy to engage with young people (some individual unions to – but not in general). The traditional way of holding meetings does not fit into the way of living now where people mainly communicate online via social media or text message. This should not replace face to face meetings though as they have a greater effect.

This though is a worldwide issue and reflected the conversation Sarah had with two young students on the metro when we arrived on the Friday. They basically said if your parents are trade unionists then you likely will be too otherwise trade unions do not seem interested in young people's needs just to make political gains.

### Other points noted on the trip

Suicide rates have shot up in Greece since the crisis and projects such as Solidarity and Costas are designed to stop people from feeling isolated and lonely. For most attendees the only conversation they have on a day to day basis will be at the projects.

It is not enough just to feed the homeless, refugees or low paid workers struggling to survive. They need more such as homes and communities which will help redevelop healthy mind sets too.

Trade unions in Greece are not political; they do not affiliate to any political party or have links to them like we do. They do have positions on what is happening but no influence. For example the trade unions said the referendum was a mistake as it would divide people. It was carried out outside of the law in 5 days

Greece have had 6 years of recession which other than after world war one has not happened!

Leadership reflects the quality of the people as they vote them in. but the media has diminished the



personalities of the leaders – they are now so exposed you don't get charismatic leaders and it destroys the person and their values.

Unemployment is at an all-time high;  
72% young women  
60% young men  
27% nationally (30% if self-employed are included)

Greece has got a long and rocky road ahead of them and it is going to get a lot worse before it gets better. As we were leaving the metro and rail services were being closed for a day as the government couldn't afford to pay the staff. This was being followed by a national strike over the changes to pensions and taxes that are being proposed which are simply unliveable and will result in more suicides, higher unemployment and greater poverty in a country that is already on its knees.

The Europe Union is not the institution it once was. It was built upon a need for prosperity, development and strength through democratic processes for the member states and it has grown into a corrupt, undemocratic monster that is focused on making the rich richer and the poor poorer.

One thing is for sure though we need to strengthen the trade union movement beyond our borders and fight together for the rights of all our workers and to force the refugee crisis to be dealt with properly by fixing the source of the problem not sweeping thousands of desperate people under the carpet like they are a burden someone else should deal with.

*Dami Benbow, Deanne Ferguson, Bindu Paul, Sarah Woolley.*

*Below: Photo courtesy of Bindu Paul and Sarah Woolley*

*Bottom right: Wills Rangel, President of the CBST*



## 5. China

- 5.1 A group of eight leading Chinese trade Unionists from Guangdong province, the most industrious in China responsible for 10% of China's GDP, visited Quorn on 16th January at short notice. They presented us with a wonderful silk embroidery of the Silk Road which will make a beautiful picture at the hotel.
- 5.2 As the Chinese delegations always do they invited us to visit them and are keen to invite affiliates to their country.
- 5.3 There is 90% trade union membership in their region and they have 30 million members. They have 3,000 full time lawyers in their region working for the trade unions. A big part of their work is looking after migrant workers into their region from other parts of China.

## 6. Venezuela

- 6.1 The GFTU was pleased to assist with a tour for two leading trade unionists at a critical time for Venezuela.
- 6.2 The contribution made by Wills Rangel, the leader of the most powerful trade union in Venezuela the Oil Workers and their TUC when he visited Quorn, has been translated by Dr Francisco Dominguez as follows:

### Wills Rangel

*President of the CBST, Venezuela's Bolivarian Socialist Trade Union Congress of Workers, Peasants and Workers of the Sea*

We have come to the UK invited by the Venezuela Solidarity Campaign to participate in their AGM but also to hold various meetings and events with fellow trade unionists, activists on Latin America, journalists and others to bring them up to date regarding the latest developments in our country and the struggles we are going through but particularly our role as working class and organised workers in them. As you probably know, the country's oligarchy in alliance with imperialism has massively intensified the decade-and-a-half-long efforts to oust the Bolivarian government the moment President Hugo Chavez passed away in March 2013. They are going for the kill and as a result we are now engaged in a life or death struggle for the Bolivarian Revolution.



We are delighted to have been invited to come to Loughborough to talk to the comrades in the GTFU about our struggle, special thanks to GFTU's General Secretary Doug Nicholls.

I am the president of the Bolivarian Socialist Trade Union Congress of Workers, Peasants and Workers of the Sea (CSBT in its Spanish acronym) the national trade union organisation that organises over 2.5 million workers, the country's largest, that is organised along 17 specific national trade union federations (cement, construction, public sector, oil, mining, industry, agriculture and so forth). I am also the President of FUTPV, the national federation of oil workers, union that has played a central role in defending the nation from the right wing's sabotage, especially, during the 2002-2003 oil lock out, aimed at causing the country's economic collapse. It was us, oil workers who managed to restore the oil industry to full capacity in a very short period of time.

The government of Hugo Chavez, followed by that of Nicolas Maduro have been enormously beneficial to working people in Venezuela. Since 1998, there have been 36 wage increases in 17 years; outsourcing is now not only illegal but also unconstitutional and as a result tens of thousands of workers have been fully incorporated into their workplaces' payroll with full rights; under Chavez and Maduro the number of pensioners has increased from about 300,000 in 1998 to over 3 million but, unlike the past, when they obtained 60% or less of their wages as pensions, now they receive it in full. To all of this, we must add free and universal health care and (primary, secondary and university) education, plus about 1.3 million heavily subsidised new self-contained homes, and much, much more.

What lies behind these gains is the new Bolivarian Constitution of 1999 and the Labour Code of 2012, both Chavez's initiatives made reality by the full, democratic participation of the people in their drafting. In the case

of the Labour Code, we in the trade unions not only organised thousands of meetings to discuss specific aspects of the Code but made 19,700 proposals, most of which were incorporated into the Law. The benefits include maternity and paternity leave, legal security of employment, employers' obligation to employ people with disabilities as full employees, gender equal pay, well developed machinery for collective

bargaining, robust mechanisms for inspection and enforcement of the Labour Code, and a Labour Ministry, representing a government sympathetic to the interests and the struggles of working people.

Thus, the right wing, domestic capitalists, multinational companies and, crucially, the United States, are not only waging an opposition campaign against Maduro but against the Bolivarian Republic and all that it means to millions of Venezuelans and millions of workers, that is, against the new society the people of Venezuela are trying to create. This offensive, reminiscent of what was done to Allende in Chile in the 1970s, involves hoarding, black market speculation for goods in short supply, contraband, currency speculation, and large scale industrial sabotage by deliberately decreasing output, disinvestment and price speculation aimed at generating hyperinflation, all designed to hit the poorest so as to weaken and demoralise the political base of Chavismo.

In January, February, March, April and part of May this year, Venezuela reached probably the lowest levels of economic activity, shortages, speculation, and we came very close to the tipping point. However, thanks to President Maduro's leadership we have been recovering ever since. This has been done through the Agenda Economica Bolivarian (Bolivarian Economic Agenda) that has identified 15 engines of economic growth (with food production and distribution – including initiatives such as urban agriculture – and pharmaceuticals, as decisive priorities), which is the product of the discussions at the national level in National Council of the Productive Economy, made up of the government's relevant ministers (including President Maduro himself), sections of the private sector who are willing to participate in joint ventures for productive activities in partnership with the government and the CSBT itself.

Unfortunately, capitalist companies sabotage these efforts, thus for example, the monopoly Kimberly-Clark decreased output and disinvested to such scale that out of 11 products it ended producing only one, until it abandoned the enterprise altogether sacking all its workers. Thanks to the Labour Code and the support from President Maduro, the workers took over the company and are now running it so successfully that in about six months its plants in Venezuela are now manufacturing 7 of the 11 it used to produce. This action is not only legal but it is also the workers' response to President Maduro's appeal to the working class: 'enterprise abandoned by the bosses, enterprise taken over by the workers'. A number of enterprises have been taken over by the workers after being abandoned by their owners.

In order to address hoarding, President Maduro has launched the CLAPS (Local Committees for Supply and Production), grassroots bodies that not only combat hoarding, and bachaqueo (black market speculation of food and basic necessities in short supply) but which have been busy ensuring the distribution of a basket of foods and basic necessities directly to the consumer, literally to their door. A few months ago, the CLAPS were doing distribution once every three weeks but quickly began to do it every two weeks and now are doing it every week to 1,347 million families. This number is



growing all the time, an indication of the success of the adopted strategy. The importance of the CLAPS has become so significant that they even have their own magazine with the telling title: *Todo el Poder Para Los CLAP* (All Power to the CLAPS).<sup>1</sup>

Thus, although Venezuela is not out of the doldrums completely yet, it is moving in that direction steadily and in the process is laying down the foundations of an alternative economic structure that will not be dependent on oil because we do not want ever again to depend on the export of oil. The transformation of Venezuela's economy has led to the export of prawns, plastic, granite and a few other manufactured goods, showing promising levels of economic reactivation and economic diversification.

More importantly, the government has just approved the budget for 2017, which is not only larger in absolute terms, but which has been financed through taxation to the tune of 85%, it has been calculated on a barrel of oil of US\$30, and with 73% for social expenditure (health, education, housing, pensions, etc.). In 2015 the proportion of social expenditure was 61% and in 2016 it went up to 64%. Now it is 73% and the right wing opposition is against it, thus the masses are in the streets to express support for the budget (a minister, correctly highlighted the fact that Venezuela must be the only country in the world where workers stage demonstrations in favour of the government's budget).

President Maduro has placed the working class at the centre and in a leadership position to struggle against the economic war the nation is being subjected to. The role of the working class in this struggle and in the construction of the new society is at the helm and at the top. Furthermore, Nicolas Maduro is the first president who is a member of the proletariat, and that is why Hugo Chavez was absolutely right when he called upon the PSUV and Venezuelans to support Nicolas in the eventuality of his departure.

What is posed for us in the future is to continue to develop the nation's productive capacities around the 15 identified engines of economic growth, to both continue reducing our dependence on oil and organising the CLAPS and other grassroots bodies to defeat completely the nasty economic war launched against millions of Venezuelans and which has caused so much hardship to so many for the last 4 years.

We know we count with the strong support of the British Labour Movement that has been exemplary in its unbreakable commitment to the Bolivarian process, but we now are asking you to redouble your solidarity during this very difficult period we are going through. We thank the Venezuela Solidarity Campaign for coordinating, organising and championing our right to self-determination.

On our part, we give you the undertaking that Venezuela's working class and the CBST will never waver in their commitment to the Bolivarian process, the support for our worker President and the new society we are constructing. The reactionary oligarchy-imperialism alliance will not defeat us.

*Viva Venezuela! Viva Maduro! Viva Chavez!*

## 7. Vietnam

- 7.1 A very useful meeting was held before Xmas with the Vietnamese Ambassador who is kindly prepared to ensure that air fares for our health and safety project are waived.
- 7.2 The GMB is very keen on this project also. Dr John Callow from GMB was able to also represent the GFTU on a recent visit to the Vietnamese General Confederation of Labour.

## 8. Turkey and Kurdistan

- 8.1 The GFTU has made representations against the actions of the Turkish government.
- 8.2 A presentation on the Kurdish communities in the Middle East was well received by the EC and it agreed to support the Free Ocalan campaign.
- 8.3 A Kurdish festival is being held at Quorn on July 30th 2017.

## 9. Latvia

- 9.1 An invitation has been extended to the Latvian Building Workers Union to send young delegates to our Youth Conference.

## 10. USA

- 10.1 Contacts with the New York Labour Council and the International Brotherhood of Machinists continued throughout the election period.

## 11. FORMAC

- 11.1 The GFTU has worked with FORMAC for many years. It was established by the OPZZ Union in Poland to support unions in Europe and beyond to find funding for special projects. We consolidated this relationship this year and invited two delegates to join our Union Building Conference and from this we are working together to seek funding for a Latin American women's conference and a Vietnamese Health and Safety project.

1. Eight of the current nine staff at the GFTU have a percentage of their contracts dedicated to Educational Trust work.
2. In 2016 the GFTU established a fully professional finance team to support our work. The new Head of Finance established a new Finance Policy which has been adopted and implemented and is subject to annual review. A range of new protocols were also adopted.
3. Two post-holders dedicated nearly 100% each to the Trust left our employment in 2016 and their responsibilities have been shared between the General Secretary and the Operations Manager.
4. Recruitment and Selection for a new Education Officer, Education Administrator and Office Support worker has been held.
5. We have over the last three years adopted an interrelated strategy which considers our finances, organisation, purpose and important professional development issues about trade union education. Risk assessment of our work is ongoing.
6. Our task financially has been to try and supplement previously exclusive GFTU subsidies to our education programme with alternative funding streams. Our purchase of Quorn Grange Hotel and Nursery and current development plans there have been central to this. We have also developed an ethical shop with New Internationalist, and we are also launching a new international publishing house with them this year called Workable Books.
7. We have sought to re direct our educational partnerships towards higher education and work more closely with supportive academics. A small research project in relation to this was commissioned and positive results from a good number of academics keen to support our work have been achieved.
8. We have adopted a clear set of principles to underpin our educational work which have taken into account the near disappearance of

government funding for trade union education, the pressures on FE colleges, the urgent need to politicise the curriculum and re develop a sense of history within it, deploy and advocate for progressive arts and cultural work and to ensure that our curriculum meets the needs of GFTU affiliates more closely. The new principles underpinning our education programme state that it will:

*Provide and develop an understanding of the political and economic context - political economy, labour and capital within which Trade Unions operate;*

*Provide and develop an understanding of the political and economic context within which has shaped, and which continues to shape, the historical development of Trade Unions;*

*Provide the skills and knowledge needed to develop confident and informed activists in order to build collective power;*

*Be informed by our commitment to the values of equality, diversity, and inclusion;*

*Be informed by our commitment to social justice, empowering communities, and internationalism.*

9. We have also taken a significant professional lead in cross fertilising the related disciplines of popular education theory and practice with trade union education. We are committed therefore to changing the way trade union education is delivered and what it delivers. We offer our first training courses in this subject this year.
10. Structurally we have established three wholly owned subsidiary companies, one to provide training on the general market, one to run the hotel and one to run the nursery.
11. We tendered for new accountants last year and appointed Sturgess Hutchinson. This has reduced our costs and improved the quality of service. Regular management accounts are produced internally. An annual budget is fixed and assessed monthly.
12. The funding to the Trust from the GFTU depends on its own health financially and this in turn depends on two factors, the number of affiliates and the impact of the triennial pension scheme valuations. One larger GFTU affiliate did not re affiliate last year but five new small and medium sized affiliates joined. The pension scheme valuation was better than predicted, the deficit is reduced somewhat but the annual GFTU payment into this of £70,000 remains the same though to be repaid over a shorter period. In addition the Pension scheme following considerable advice is adopting a new statement of funding principles and investment strategy.



13. We have a tradition of supporting university students in their studies through bursaries. For the next three years we are funding Edda Nicolson to produce an up to date history of the GFTU at the University of Wolverhampton, we have given a bursary of £1,500 to the President of BECTU to study trade unionism and free-lance work, and we have donated small £100 prizes to students in the Industrial Relations Department at De Montfort University. In addition Dr Shirin Hirsch has been appointed to a post doctorate at Wolverhampton which enables her to contribute some time to our education work.
14. We occasionally donate to worthwhile educational and historic projects. This year we have donated £1,500 to the Marx Memorial Library to restore some Spanish Civil War Banners, £1,000 to the Radical Book Fair as author prizes, £2,000 to Banner Theatre to assist in the compilation of a book of the songs of Dave Rogers with music transcription and photographs. We have donated also to assist in the production of a film about the London Recruits, those brave young trade unionists who went to South Africa to undertake clandestine work against the Apartheid regime. We commissioned a new performance piece Our History Our Future which can be used at Union education events and conferences.
15. We were pleased also to be able to support the production of a play about an early leading woman trade unionist who was on the GFTU Executive, Mary Quail, and to support the work to preserve archives of the North West Women's Union.
16. Our normal funding of a biennial study visit by the Executive Committee of the GFTU did not take place in quite the same way in 2016 due to funding and time pressures on the committee. However, we were able to fund a visit by younger EC members to Greece. We have also been able to support two educational exchanges to the GFTU by ESNA the Latin American trade union education and research organisation. Work with the Vietnamese embassy should enable us to support a health and safety exchange with Vietnamese trade unionists this year. A Kurdish arts and culture festival is also planned at Quorn on July 30th.
17. The Trust has supported two new initiatives. Quarterly meeting opportunities under the banner of Continuous Professional Development for various specialist trade union officers namely, education officers, HR managers, Health and Safety Officers, Finance and Admin Officers. We also support two meetings a year of General Secretaries. To extend and deepen the debates on education and union development matters the Trust supported a GFTU Summit in 2015 and a Union Development Conference in 2016.
18. In actively seeking to diversify our funding a number of external grant applications have been made and a number of bids supported. The most successful bid has been with Wolverhampton University and £670,000 has been secured for the university to do a study of the history of the North Wales coalfields with two new post-doctoral students, this will release some capacity for closer partnership working with the university. We were unsuccessful in our bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a project over three years to engage young people in studying the history of young people's engagement in the trade union and community movements. However, the Heritage Lottery Fund have requested a meeting about the relevance of other funding streams to our work.
19. In order to begin to professionalise and regularise our external fund raising interviews with fundraising companies have been held and an initial contract to make some applications has been agreed.
20. In addition, we met with two representatives of FORMAC to consider joint funding on a number of related projects. FORMAC is a trade union related fund raising company established by the Polish Union OPZZ. It has a successful track record in obtaining significant funding for partnership projects throughout Europe and indeed the GFTU has been party to several of these over the years. Two potential partnership bids are being considered at the moment one to support our work on health and safety with the Vietnamese General Confederation of Labour and one to support work on youth engagement in unions.
21. In 2015 significant expenditure was made on a new integrated computer system to replace outdated hardware throughout. This was struck by a near fatal computer virus that seriously damaged all GFTU related organisations. As an illustration all of the Trusts Education Programmes were destroyed. We would estimate the cost of this alone as £130,000. The system was then struck by some other spam attacks and has remained unstable since. A comprehensive independent review of our situation and future requirements is underway and an interim report has been received. Tenders for a new maintainer will be circulated and a new six month post of ICT Officer will be created.
22. The Trust has also begun to support new initiatives in using the arts and culture in education and these are reported on more fully below.
23. We have established a good new platform and now is the time to consolidate it and market our new initiatives more fully.
24. The Trust is offering its biggest and most comprehensive education programme in 2017/2018. This seeks to expand the subjects delivered, improve the way they are taught, generate business for the hotel through new public events and operate more flexibly.
25. The Trust has been three full time staff down for the year.
26. The Trust has established a small working group to assist the viability assessment of the proposed new build at Quorn.



27. The Trust supported a special event to explore ways of using arts and culture to support union organising, campaigning and education work. This was generally considered a very worthwhile and unique day. Around 65 attended including all arts related affiliates. Performances and discussions were excellent. It provided a great building block for the Liberating Arts Festival November 3,4,5 2017 and took us a long way forward in terms of considering how arts and cultural workers can assist the union work of organising, education and campaigning.
28. The Trust was also able to support the performance of a new play about Mary Quaile by a new young theatre group in Nottingham, Bread and Roses.
29. Following these events a small group organising the Liberating Arts Festival has met to plan things and apply for grants. This group includes Townsend Productions, Exeter and York Universities, Reel News, Chris Jury, Jan Woolf, Banner Theatre and others.
30. A report of our December 6th Event by Jan Woolf of the WGGB can be found at the end of this report.
31. The Trust has continued to take detailed reports on performance at Quorn Grange Hotel and Nursery and has established a wholly own subsidiary to run the nursery.
32. The Trust has been keen to support the development of new services that could generate small additional income for its work. Among these have been: New GFTU Legal services for affiliates, new venue booking arrangements, a print and design facility, a credit union, new financial services offers to members, financial and education administration for affiliates and a new beer and wine.
33. There has been positive support for our work from a growing number of Universities.
- 33.1 **Leeds Beckett**
- 33.2 This meeting was at the most senior level with Vice Chancellor and Deans and Heads of Department and discussed a whole range of ways in which the University could support our education work. Further meetings will be held. A Memorandum of Understanding has been agreed.
- 33.3 The university will deliver our new course for trade union educators in 2017.
- 33.4 **Newman University**
- 33.5 The University will deliver our new course for trade union educators at Level 6.
- 33.6 Mike Seal from Newman is putting a great deal of work into our editing our book on trade union education and made presentations at the summit and union building conference.
- 33.7 **Ruskin College**
- 33.8 Positive discussions are under way about closer working. The Secretary remains a member of the Executive Board of Ruskin. The Trust has circulated details of the Ruskin offer.
- 33.9 The Secretary was an invited speaker at the special Ruskin Day on the future of Working Class Education.
- 33.10 **Somerville College Oxford**
- 33.11 Dr Alice Porcheska who is a distinguished internationally renowned historian and archivist, wrote the first history of the GFTU. She is now Principal of Somerville College Oxford. She is keen to share some of her unpublished work on the GFTU's history with our new Ph D student and to work closely with us again. Dr Procheska also arranged to host a meeting of education officers at Somerville college to discuss access to the university for trade unionists.
- 33.12 **Northern College**
- 33.13 Our five day courses at Northern were very successful. The Trust has been able to promote Northern College and Ruskin College at the TUC and in its new education brochure.
- 33.14 **Wolverhampton University**
- 33.15 Our partnered bid for £670,000 with the university to study the North Wales Coalfields and appoint two post doc students to work with the GFTU has been successful.
- 33.16 Dr Shirin Hirsch the current post doc student working with the GFTU has commenced her work and made a contribution at the Union Building Conference.
- 33.17 We were able to make a successful appointment for a PhD student to write a history of the GFTU. We are delighted to report that Edda Nicholson has been offered the position.
- 33.18 **DeMontfort University**
- 33.19 We have offered two small prizes for students at DeMontfort successfully completing IR related courses and I will present these at the end of January. Extensive discussions have been held about mutual co-operation and opportunities.
- 33.20 **Exeter University**
- 33.21 The University is keen to sign a partnership with us particularly to support our cultural work, promote degree apprenticeships, consider work on climate change and developmental issues internationally.
- 33.22 **Marjohn College**
- 33.23 The College is keen to sign a partnership with us particularly to support our education agenda.
- 33.24 **Keele University**
- 33.25 A joint funding bid to support seminars to consider the questions facing trade unionists in the EU referendum was obtained and three seminars were held.

- 33.26 A meeting to consider joint working was held.
- 33.27 Dr Stephen French made a contribution to the Union Building Conference on Performance management and attended a meeting with one union to consider training for senior managers.
- 33.28 **Birmingham University**
- 33.29 The General Secretary participated as a speaker in three different seminars at the University. One concerning an international study by Dr Andy Hodder on trade union strategies to engage young people, a second on the use of popular education in trade union education and the third on key issues in arguing for an alternative education strategy.
- 33.30 The Trust has support work to build cultural and educational links internationally with Latin America, China, Vietnam, Venezuela, Bolivia, and the Kurdish community in Britain,
- 33.31 The Trustees have reviewed the application and relevance of the Trust deed and made no amendments. Induction training has been given to new Trustees and consideration has been given to expanding the Trustees' group and areas of expertise.
- 33.32 Developments in legislation and guidance from the Charity Commissioners have been considered.
- 33.33 The Trust gratefully received a donation from the Rowe Leventon Trust when it was wound up. It has agreed to allocate sums from this donation to the making of a film about the trade unionists who supported the Anti Apartheid struggle, to commission some new artwork from the Artists Union of England and the Scottish Artists Union for Quorn Grange Hotel and our general education programme. The Rowe Leventon Trust was named after two pioneering trade unionists from Manchester in the youth and community sector. Sandar Leventon who may well have been the first woman General Secretary when she was elected to that role in the Community and Youth Service Association. Stanley Rowe was a youth worker and pioneer of collective bargaining in the sector. Together with Sandra he brought the disparate professional associations and unions in youth work and community work together and led a 13 year struggle to establish collective bargaining in the sector, the JNC for youth and community workers. It was pleasing therefore that also in 2016 the GFTU could lend support to the unions' successful struggle to break up this bargaining committee, one of the best in the public sector.



Article by  
Jan Woolfe,  
WGGB  
Member and  
writer and  
artist.

'There is an urgent need for progressive artists to be involved in the Movement.' This opening remark from GFTU's general secretary Doug Nicholls at The of Trade Unions event in Bedford December 6th 2016, was organised by the General Federation of Trade Unions and its open network of arts' union members Liberating Arts.

An audience of trade union activists and officers, academics and artists watched performances and presentations that had one agenda; how cultural workers can better serve and celebrate, working class struggle. In short, change things.

It is clear how this might have happened in the past. Novels like the Ragged Trousered Philanthropist, the work of Dickens and Jack London, helped change consciousness to pave the way for the welfare state, but are safely lodged in the past – and of course, we'll never get back to those days. Won't we? Ken Loach's recent masterpiece I, Daniel Blake reveals the vicious effects of neo-liberalism on working class people. It's how art works with and through us during this time of change for the working class today that is the challenge.

Academic and activist Rebecca Hillman talked about collaborations between theatre makers and trade unions, how it can be used to challenge oppressive structures, and how art can be used as a political tool.

This was a theme taken up by Dave Smith of Blacklisted, who spoke of 'propaganda by the deed,' and the campaign to expose the recent blacklisting of union activists in the construction industry which had been supported by various art forms from documentary film to song.

Peter Marcuse from the artists' collective Brandalism

discussed their campaign against the corporate control of outdoor advertising – how it pollutes our minds. Advertisements were taken down and replaced with different images by this art collective.

After a call for graphic artists to attend AA meetings (Advertisers Anonymous), intrigued designers turned up, keen to take on the toxicity of consumerism and adopt the manifesto 'Advertising shits in your head. When asked about the legality of the campaign, Peter's answer was.

'They didn't ask if they could put their images in our faces, so we didn't ask them if we could take them down.'

'What got you going?' I asked him later.

"We were motivated by the dominance of commercial images in our cities, and the idea that those with the most amount of money can display their messages in front of us without our consent. Advertising regularly re-asserts problematic cultural values that appeal to our sense of status, individualism, wealth and power - rather than socially beneficial values like equality, community and solidarity... Confronting the advertising industry means organizing... and challenging one of a key drivers of neoliberal consumer capitalism."

Another 'artist' was Theresa Easton of the Artists' Union of England, talking about her work with communities engaged in activism – a hidden art force putting the paper images into a campaign, notably the Durham Teaching Assistants strike, when their employers tried to cut their pay by 23%. Did those employers really expect them to lose £5k a year?

Sean Dey of Reel News was involved too – showing his film of highly energised protests, mostly women, at the Durham demonstrations of November 2016, and eighty picket lines of newly empowered workers. You don't get that back in the bottle so easily.

Reel News is a video activists collective who know how to use social media well, how, paradoxically, to use it to build that old fashioned idea of getting people in a room talking together.

Art in education was a big theme of the GFTU event. Poet Jess Green – all staccato movement and Kate Tempest intensity - expressed through her performance, the imperative of education – Latin - educare - to lead out – about the folly of excessive testing of children and the pointless bureaucracy imposed on young teachers. 'Let kids be kids not a national average statistic.'

Banner Theatre, who have been working with trade unions since the early 1970s, did a great performance and music piece on the recent Chicago teachers strike, and the formation of Coalition of Radical Educators (CORE) a group that transformed their sluggish union into a fighting force



Photos courtesy of John Harris, ReportDigital







Doug Nicholls

Photo courtesy of Kevin Hayes

that took on the slow privatisation of Chicago's schools, stopping them becoming little businesses.

Townsend Productions performed extracts from Tolpuddle Theatre, and United We Stand – and their current touring production Dare Devil Rides to Jamara, by Neil Gore, his new play about Clem Beckett a motorbike speed rider who volunteered to fight fascists in the Spanish Civil War. Another character is the Marxist critic Christopher Caudwell. Caudwell on stage? Fascinating stuff. This is sophisticated drama, not agit' prop.

An invigorated audience generated some interesting ideas for;

1. alternative arts councils, funded by the Trade Unions
2. a centre/theatre as a home to working class theatre.
3. importance of the revival of satire
4. use of a common language around the arts, whatever the level.
5. professionalism and excellence
6. importance of a fair rate to artists, making communities stronger.

This was a powerful and timely day that reminded us that art can serve politics by revealing and mirroring our society. It can put the oomph into a campaign,

inspire and motivate, help the ideas slip down nicely in education events, but it is its transformational nature that's so important, and the role that art plays in a fulfilled life.

Like food, it nourishes, and we can't live without it. But this was a given; no need to rehearse and finesse psychological theories about art and the individual and society. This event was a step on the way to a three day Liberating Arts festival planned for November 3,4,5 2017.

As the trade union movement gears up towards a high level of struggle during the next few years cultural work will be strengthened to appeal to the head and heart. For art changes people, and so does activism. Together they're dynamite.

**Doug Nicholls concluded with an observation about our national poet Shakespeare;**

*"It's no accident that our great national poet and playwright was on our side, a socialist. Shakespeare in his history plays and great tragedies depicts the economic and moral collapse of the feudal system, in his Roman plays he shows how any socially divided society is undemocratic and ruled by despots and in his comedies, particularly plays like The Comedy of Errors, he shows how the market driven economy destroys social relationships and how human identity is distorted by profit and the cash nexus."*



## Davey Hopper

Legendary leader of the Durham Miners' and inveterate organiser of the Big Meet, Davey Hopper was also a great friend of the GFTU. He strongly supported our efforts to rekindle trade union links with Vietnam and attended our London public meeting with several Vietnamese colleagues. Davey of course helped us massively with our exhibition of John Harris's wonderful pictures of the miners' strike when we were at the

Liverpool TUC and he made a speech there that few will forget and which moved everyone in the packed audience. Dave also fully supported our work to create greater awareness about ESNA and attended all of our seminars in London with them. Davey ensured that the GFTU took its place on the platform of the Gala and became a friend of our General Secretary. The General Secretary represented the Federation at Davey's funeral. In Davey's memory we hope all those who have never been to the gala will turn out this July.



## Carole Adair

We all remember Carole Adair President of the AEP with great affection, here is the tribute paid to her by AEP General Secretary Kate Fallon.

"Carole was committed to the AEP – she was elected to its National Executive Committee nearly 20 years ago – she was a staunch advocate of its trade union principles and professional aims, being equally concerned about promoting the wellbeing of children and young people as she was of educational psychologists.

She could be a formidable operator, enjoying great respect amongst colleagues from across the trade union movement, but particularly in Northern Ireland, where she will be remembered for many years as the champion for educational psychology and educational psychologists.

She took her role as the AEP's Representative for NI extremely seriously and professionally – she was passionate about Northern Ireland - and, subsequently, demonstrated the same as both vice President and President.

During the last year we all watched her exercising the office of president with integrity and leadership – trying to manage psychologists is said to be rather like herding cats – imagine trying to chair the profession's executive committee - but Carole rose to the challenge!

She was an attentive listener, immediately impressing others by her astute and intelligent approach to complex issues – she had a light touch, but good touch approach

to difficult situations, never allowing them to get the better of her, whilst remaining tenacious in pursuing what she believed to be right.

I asked a number of people to share their thoughts about Carole – they all spoke about her intelligence, her professionalism, her commitment but they also all mentioned her humour, her great sense of fun, her dry wit – you didn't spend long with Carole without there being some laughter – if there is such a word as well roundedness then that would be the word to describe her. Conversations would soon extend to talk about travel and her adventures, her love of singing and the choir's activities and, of course her beloved children and grandchildren – we felt that we knew you all – I even attempted, on one occasion, to imitate Carole imitating Annie Rose imitating Kirsti's Northern Irish accent. I failed miserably!"

After National Executive Committee meetings we would often all go out to have a drink and eat together – where Carole demonstrated yet another passion – she would only ever drink New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc which was often the most expensive white wine in the restaurant or bar so we were in the process of trying to persuade her to try other drinks.

We will miss Carole Adair – educational psychology in Northern Ireland and the AEP will be much poorer for our loss but today we celebrate and remember and give thanks for the contribution she made to all our lives – and we may do the same later, with a glass of sauvignon blanc – New Zealand of course!"

## David Coates

Former GFTU Executive member and official in the Furniture Timber and Allied Trades Union which merged eventually with the GMB David was of the very strongest English stock, firm and unbending, solid as oak and a lifelong advocate for his union and the GFTU. He became a Labour councillor in Kent in later life and long after retirement retained an interest in our affairs. David was always pleased to see progress at the GFTU

and General Secretary Doug Nicholls recalls him as: "one of the very best. The GFTU was a bit stuffy sometimes in the mid-nineties, but I will never forget the warm welcome David gave to my union when we joined the federation, he was keen to find out about a new affiliate and make us feel at home with a joke and excellent company. He had stamina in all ways, as a long distance runner and as someone who had seen so much and fought for so much he could see us through any difficult situation. As sharp as a plane iron."

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE 2015-2017

## 2015 Executive Committee Attendance

Name	20 Jan	17 Feb	17 Mar	17 May	16 June	22 Sep	27 Nov	Actual	Possible
Mr J. Fray (President)	X	X	X	X	-	-	-	4	4
Ms L Ambler	A	X	X	X	-	-	-	3	4
Mr B Marshall	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	5	7
Mr P Davies	A	X	A	X	-	-	-	2	4
Mr J Smith	A	A	A	X	A	X	X	3	7
Mr O Williams	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7	7
Mr R Draper	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7	7
Mr R Rickhuss	A	X	A	X	A	X	X	4	7
Mr R Mooney	X	A	A	X	X	X	X	5	7
Mrs B Paul	X	X	X	X	A	X	A	5	7
Ms S Woolley	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7	7
Ms C Jones	-	-	-	-	-	X	A	1	2
Mrs Y Pattison	-	-	-	-	A	X	X	2	3
Mr M Cortes	A	A	X	A	X	X	A	3	7
Mr K Williamson (Subs)	-	-	-	-	X	X	X	3	
Mr J Toner	-	-	-	A	A	X	A	1	4
Mrs B Robb	-	-	-	A	X	A	A	1	4
Mr B Linn	-	-	-	A	A	X	X	2	4
Mrs A Pratten	-	-	-	X	X	A	A	2	4
Mr R Rickhuss	A	X	A	X	A	A	X	3	7
Mr I Lawrence	A	X	X	X	X	A	X	5	7
Mr N Crewe (Subs)	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	1	
Mr L Crawley	-	-	X	A	X	X	-	3	
Mr T Burke	A	A	A	A	A	-	-	0	5
Ms L O'Conner	X	A	X	A	-	-	-	2	4
Mr L Woodward	A	X	X	A	-	-	-	2	4
Miss L Sharpe	A	X	A	X	X	A	-	3	6
Miss L Robinson	A	A	A	A	-	-	-	0	4
Mr J Stribley	-	-	-	-	A	A	A	0	3
Mr Davies	A	A	X	-	-	-	-	1	3
Mr Allen	-	-	-	A	X	X	A	2	4

**Key** X = Present A = Absent M = Maternity

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE 2015-2017

## 2016 Executive Committee Attendance

Name	20 Jan	16 March	18 May	20 July	21 Sep	25 Nov	Actual	Possible
Mr B Marshall (President)	X	X	A	A	X	X	4	6
Mr J Smith (Vice President)	A	X	X	X	A	X	4	6
Mr O Williams	X	A	X	A	A	X	3	6
Mr R Draper	X	X	X	X	X	X	6	6
Mr R Rickhuss	A	A	A	A	X	X	2	6
Mr R Mooney	X	X	A	A	X	X	2	6
Mrs B Paul	X	X	X	X	M	M	4	6
Ms S Woolley	X	X	X	X	X	X	6	6
Ms J Nicholl	-	A	A	A	A	A	0	5
Ms J Macfarlane (Subs)	-	-	X	-	-	-	1	
Ms T Easton	-	-	X	X	A	A	2	4
Mr M Dickenson	-	-	A	A	A	A	0	4
Ms C Jones	A	A	A	X	A	A	1	6
Mrs Y Pattison	X	X	X	X	X	X	6	6
Mr M Cortes	X	X	X	X	A	X	5	6
Mr K Williamson (Subs)	X	X	X	X	A	X	5	
Mr J Toner	X	A	X	X	A	A	3	6
Mrs B Robb	A	A	X	A	A	A	1	6
Mr B Linn	A	A	X	A	A	X	2	6
Mrs A Pratten	A	A	A	A	X	X	2	6
Mr I Lawrence	X	A	A	X	X	X	4	6
Mr J McGowan (Aug)	-	-	-	-	A	X	1	2
Mr N McCarthy (July)	-	-	-	A	A	A	0	3
Mr N Crewe (Subs)	X	X	X	X	A	A	4	
Mr L Crawley	A	X	X	X	X	A	4	6
Mr G Elliott (Subs)	-	-	X	X	A	X	3	4
Mr D. Allen	X	A	A	X	-	-	2	4
Mr S Gillan	-	-	-	-	-	A	0	1
Mr T Conway	X	X	A	-	-	-	1	1
Mr J. Stribley	A	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Mr T. Burke	A	-	-	-	-	-	0	1

**Key** X = Present A = Absent M = Maternity

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2015-2017



President  
Ben Marshall  
*Prospect*



Vice President  
John Smith  
*Musicians' Union*

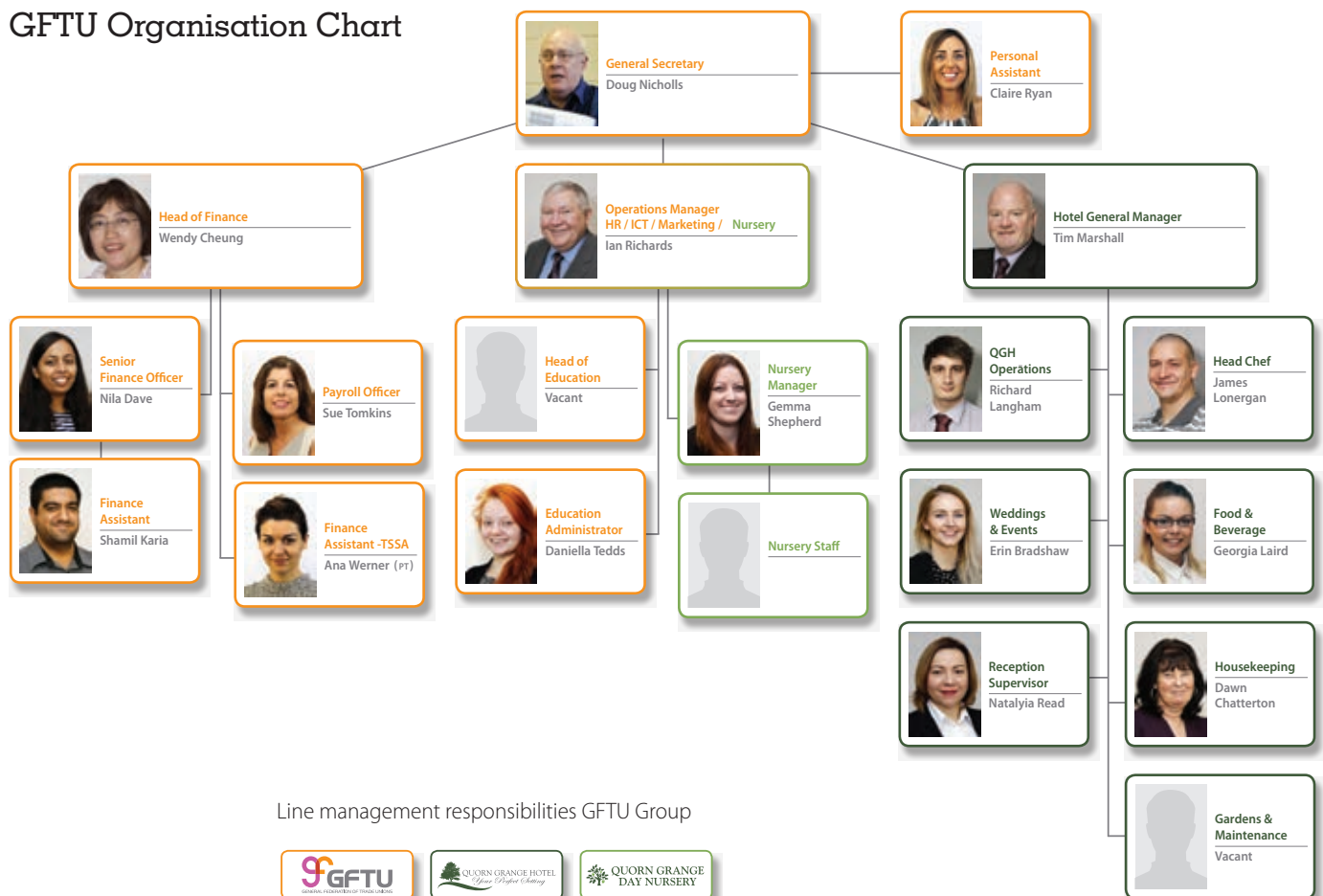
## 2017 Committee Members

Mr B Marshall (President)	Mr M Cortes
Mr J Smith (Vice President)	Mr K Williamson (Subs)
Mr O Williams	Mr J Toner
Mr R Draper	Mr B Linn
Mr R Rickhuss	Mrs A Pratten
Mr R Mooney	Mr I Lawrence
Mrs B Paul	Mr J McGowan (Aug)
Ms S Woolley	Mr N McCarthy (July)
Ms J Nicholl	Mr L Crawley
Ms T Easton	Mr G Elliott (Subs)
Ms C Jones	Mr S Gillan
Mrs Y Pattison	

Photos courtesy of Ade Marsh



## GFTU Organisation Chart



Line management responsibilities GFTU Group



### Officers of the GFTU

President, Ben Marshall  
 Vice President, John Smith  
 General Secretary and Treasurer, Doug Nicholls

### Finance and General Purposes Committee

Ronnie Draper  
 Ben Marshall (Chair)  
 Doug Nicholls (Secretary)  
 Roy Rickhuss  
 John Smith  
 Sarah Woolley

### Senior Staff

Head of Finance, Wendy Cheung  
 Operations Manager, Ian Richards  
 Hotel General Manager, Tim Marshall  
 PA to the General Secretary, Claire Ryan  
 Senior Finance Officer, Nila Dave  
 Hotel Operations Manager, Richard Langham

Hotel Head of Housekeeping, Dawn Chatterton  
 Hotel Head Chef, James Lonergan  
 Hotel Head of Events, Erin Bradshaw

### GFTU Trustees

David Ashley  
 Andy Moorhouse  
 Sarah Wold

### 2015 Accountants & Auditors

UHP Hacker Young

### 2016 Accountants & Auditors

Sturgess Hutchinson

### Pension Scheme Trustees

Ben Marshall (Chair)  
 Molly Moyo  
 Doug Nicholls (Secretary)  
 John Smith  
 Rod Smith

## **Pensions Scheme Lawyer**

Ivan Walker

## **Pension Scheme Actuary**

John Livesey

## **Pension Scheme Actuaries**

Mercer and Co.

## **Pension Scheme Investments**

Legal and General Investment Managers

## **Pension Scheme Accountants**

Sturgess Hutchinson

## **GFTU Bankers**

Unity Trust Bank

## **Investment Managers**

Pam Beith, Brooks MacDonald  
Mike McHugh, City Asset Management

## **Financial Advisors**

Mark Dallas, Lighthouse Financial Services.

## **Shareholdings**

Unity Trust Bank  
Royal Bank of Scotland  
Astra Zeneca  
Trade Union Fund Managers

## **Educational Trust Trustees**

Lynne Ambler  
Dami Benbow  
Prof.Sian Moore  
Doug Nicholls (Secretary)  
Steve Orchard  
Bindu Paul  
Dr Alice Prochaska  
Angela Pratten  
Nadine Rae  
Dr Michael Sanders  
John Smith (Chair)

## **GFTU Education Trust**

## **Trading Company Directors**

Lynne Ambler  
John Fray  
Doug Nicholls (Secretary)  
Nikki Sharpe

## **GFTU Education Trust**

## **Trading Company**

## **Quorn Grange Nursery**

Lynne Ambler  
Doug Nicholls (Sec)  
Ian Richards  
Nikki Sharpe

## **Next Generation Festival Organising group**

Charlotte Appleyard  
Charlotte Bence  
Sarah Woolley

## **Workable Books advisory**

Daniel Raymond Barker  
Chris Brazier  
Dr Jo Grady  
Mike Seal

## **Property and Employment Law Legal Advisors**

Morrish and Co.

## **Shared Service Legal Partners**

Morrish and Co.

## **Property Development Project Manager**

Mark Childs, Hutchinson Morrison and Childs

## **Property Valuers**

Christie and Co

## **Information Communications and Technology Support**

Tony Johnson  
ICT Maintainer

## **Designers and Printers**

John Evans, Eagle Graphics  
Joanne Griffiths, Brightidea  
TSSA Print

## **Hotel Social Media**

Shake Media

## **GFTU Website**

Bob Ansell  
Apple Media

## **GFTU Archivist**

Stefan Dickers, Bishopsgate Institute.

## **Promotional Materials**

TC Branding  
Thomas Fattorini and Co.

## **Conference & Hotel Bookings**

RedMeet

## **Staff Training**

Green Consultancy

## **Fundraising**

Citrus Consultancy

# AFFILIATIONS, DONATIONS, PARTNERS

From time to time the GFTU Executive Committee agrees to affiliate to organisations or to donate to them.

- Banner Theatre
- British Youth Council
- Campaign for Trade Union Freedom
- Centre for Labour and Social Studies.
- Culture Matters
- Cuba Solidarity Campaign.
- Elite Centre for Manufacturing Excellence
- Equity
- Free Ocalan Campaign
- Global Labour Institute
- Hazards
- Independent Working Class Education Association
- International Centre for Trade Union Rights
- Institute of Employment Rights
- Justice for Colombia
- LabourNet
- Labour Research Department
- Marx Memorial Library
- Mary Quaile Club
- Morning Star
- National Pensioners Convention
- National Union of Students
- New Internationalist
- Peace in Kurdistan Campaign
- People's History Museum
- Townsend Productions
- Trade Union Friends of Bolivia
- Trade Union Friends of Vietnam
- Union Solidarity International
- Venezuela Solidarity Campaign
- Vietnam UK Network
- Workers Music Association
- Writers Guild of Great Britain







Photos by Kevin Hayes

## Motion 1

### Artists Union England

## 1% for Art

- 1 Artists' Union England propose that this conference agree that 1 percent of any new-build construction, renovation, conversion or major refurbishment by an affiliate member be spent on buying or commissioning public art.
- 2 The GFTU's recent commitment to purchase artwork for Quorn Grange Hotel is an example of support and solidarity with creative workers. 'Percent for Art' is an established scheme in USA and Europe, endorsed by local and national public bodies. The UK does not have a 'percent for art' scheme - although some regional and municipal bodies have developed something similar. The GFTU would be paving the way forward in establishing a progressive and bold approach to the environments we want to work in as well as supporting the work of artists in the UK.

## Motion 2

### Community

## Sharing the 'gig' economy with all

Conference notes that the 'gig' economy can and should be fairer and acknowledges the role trade unions have had in securing that in recent months. Conference believes that the 'gig' economy can play a pivotal role in providing a path back to work for those who struggle to gain access to traditional employment such as new parents or disabled workers. C

Conference notes Uber's new partnership with Lingoing that aims to attract a greater number of deaf and hard of hearing partners onto the Uber app and takes advantage of the use of accessible technology.

Conference believes that the systems operating in the UK to support traditional employment, whether through employment law, tax systems or the welfare state, contradict the needs of 'gig' workers and 'gig' employers and further excludes those who struggle to access work. Conference believes it is crucial that trade unions engage with digital platforms such as Deliveroo to make meaningful and timely interventions that provide fairer working conditions.

### Conference calls on the GFTU to:

- A Work with organisations, companies and commissions that are providing thinking and resource on shaping the 'gig' economy to ensure it is fair for everyone.
- B Work with Government to rethink employment law, tax systems and the welfare state to the benefit of 'gig' workers.
- C Encourage trade unions to modernise traditional structures and models to ensure that members that are not based in workplaces can participate fully in union activities

## Motion 3

### NAPO

## Representatives, Training

- 1 The GFTU plays a critical role in helping small unions train representatives. The formation of a training co-ordinators network to help shape, develop and test the representative training programme is welcomed as positive and should be encouraged and supported.
- 2 This BCGM thinks that there is scope for the GFTU to broaden its impact by using this network to identify best practice and sharing best practice in training for union activists where the focus is on softer skills, vital to successful union organizing, but not traditionally central to representative training - such as active listening, overcoming deficit thinking through positive communication, and writing effective campaigning materials.

## Motion 3 continued

- 3 Similarly the GFTU should promote identifying common recruitment and organising challenges and support active learning around best practice and overcoming these challenges. For example, managers are critical union gatekeepers across the public sector but some unions, such as Napo have seen a significant reduction of membership in managerial roles and could learn from unions who have retained strong managerial membership levels.

### **This BCGM calls upon the GFTU to:**

- A identify examples of best practice and such opportunities for such sharing
- B use the training co-ordinators network to support this activity
- C identify champions, who can be supported to lead on progressing identified themes
- D use the GFTU'S network to access academics, specialists and experts in other fields to support developing the highest quality of training and practice in these critical skills.

## Motion 4

### NAPO

## Promoting efficiencies & greater inter-union co-operation

- 1 The GFTU provides a safe space for union leaders to come together, share challenges, and celebrate successes. However, all GFTU affiliates will be aiming to stretch resources so they have the maximum impact for members and this BCGM believes that the GFTU is not fulfilling it's potential as a broker for finding shared solutions to common resourcing challenges amongst affiliates.
- 2 By definition affiliates are small so capacity to find solutions to internal operational challenges is difficult - in terms of time, expertise and cost. For example, Napo would like to have cutting edge integrated ICT platforms that could make our membership, finance and communications more efficient and effective with a direct benefit for supporting activists, campaigning and organising. This is difficult as we have limited time and expertise to devote to this and options can be disproportionately expensive.
- 3 This BCGM believes that through the safe space provided by the GFTU, common challenges can be identified and common solutions explored, extending to shared commissioning and economies of scale in areas such as ICT, insurance and internal financial support, internal legal services, and aspects of HR support.
- 4 This principle can extend to shared commissioning of research into common bargaining challenges, with the GFTU brokering this via their network of academics.
- 5 Indeed, this BCGM believes the GFTU is uniquely placed to promote, co-ordinate and broker such sharing across affiliates.

### **Therefore, this BCGM calls upon the GFTU to:**

- A include opportunities to specifically promote this sharing in the GFTU annual events programme.
- B create a working party of union sharing champions

## Motion 5

### NAPO

## Domestic violence victims in the Family Court System

- 1 This BCGM welcomes the announcement of an emergency review of the Family Court system on the need to afford greater protection to the victims of Domestic Violence and the prevention of the situation where perpetrators may cross examine their victims at hearings. This practice serves only to re-victimise and passers the power to perpetrators in a system which is there to protect victims. This anomaly is already prohibited in the Criminal Courts.

## Motion 5 continued

### This BGCM instructs the Executive Committee to

- A commission support and research from our associated academics on this important issue.
- B seek input by way of a survey of Napo members working in CAF/CASS
- C seek an urgent approach from the legal professions and Women's Aid with a view to assisting the GFTU in aiming to influence the outcomes of the review through Parliament.

## Motion 6

### NAPO

## Probation reform and public safety

- 1 This BGCM is dismayed at the state of the Probation Service in England and Wales and the serious risk to public safety following the disastrous part-privatisation of the service under the Transforming Rehabilitation programme. An increase in serious further offences, and a number of other shortcomings have been highlighted in successive reports by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. This position is not tenable, public safety is at risk and with further reforms planned in the forthcoming Offender Management Review and Offender Management in Custody reviews Napo is fearful that we do not need further change on a whim and prior to testing.

### This BCGM asks that the GFTU Executive Committee is instructed to:

- A invite our associated academics to undertake research into the impact of the reforms, including the alarming increases in the number of serious further offences that have occurred within certain Community Rehabilitation Companies.
- B if appropriate, put pressure on the justice sector to properly research and come up with alternatives to reduce the risk to the public

## Motion 7

### Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union

## Attacks on pay

- 1 That this conference agrees to lobby government, the Labour Party and TUC to stop the abuse of workers pay, terms and conditions to compensate for the implementation of the so called living wage. Cuts to overtime, Bank holiday and premium payments are becoming the norm and driving many thousands of workers to the brink of poverty.

## Motion 8

### Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union

## US Campaign for living wage, \$15 per hour

- 1 That this conference congratulates those Cities and States in USA, who have ratified a \$15 per hour wage. We further salute the 100000's of low paid workers who have risked their liberty by taking strike action against serial pay abusers like McDonalds etc. Their fight has been a fantastic example of what can be achieved when workers stand together and has become a global campaign against low pay in the fast food industry, which the BFAWU are proud to support.

## Motion 9

### Musicians Union

## Performers and Mental Health

- 1 A 2014 survey by Help Musicians UK revealed the high levels of mental health problems within the musician community. Of those surveyed, 67% had, on occasion, suffered from depression or other psychological problems, 75% had experienced performance anxiety and 62% had experienced relationship difficulties.
- 2 There has recently been an increased awareness of mental health within the creative industries and this is something that the entertainment unions' welcome, since the unusual nature of a performer's working life can make them more vulnerable to certain mental health issues. Musicians, actors and other performers regularly face antisocial hours, loneliness, worries about

## Motion 9 continued

money and strain placed on relationships due to touring, all of which can be detrimental to their mental health. This combined with the pressure of working in the creative industries can lead to performers developing issues with alcohol and drug abuse as a coping mechanism. Cases such as the death of Amy Winehouse have highlighted that the music industry and the creative industries in general need to do more to support performers.

- 3 The BGCM supports all efforts to promote better mental health within the creative industries, and highlights the work of the British Association for Performing Arts Medicine (BAPAM) in treating both physical and mental health issues in performers and Help Musicians UK for supporting this essential work.

## Motion 10

### Musicians Union

## Music Co-operatives

- 1 The Musicians' Union (MU) released its third report into the state of music education in England in 2016. The report highlighted that yet more instrumental music teachers have lost their jobs or left the profession due to worsening terms and conditions over the last year. MU members also highlighted their concerns about the inconsistency of music education provision across the country due to the varying attitudes of schools and head teachers towards music.
- 2 Instrumental music teachers faced with redundancy or worsening terms and conditions have, in some areas, been setting up co-operatives and independent trusts. These appear to be working very well and are examples of how high quality, accessible and affordable music education delivered by a committed and skilled workforce can still be provided. The MU is a member of Co-operatives UK and is providing advice and assistance to MU members who wish to set up their own co-operatives. For example, the MU assisted a group of members in Milton Keynes to form their teaching co-operative following the council's decision to make the majority of their instrumental teaching workforce redundant.
- 3 This BGCM believes that every child should be given the opportunity to learn a musical instrument, as was the aspiration of the National Plan for Music Education, and condemns all cuts to music education. The GFTU applauds efforts by instrumental teachers and the MU to form cooperatives and pledges to support this work.

## Motion 11

### Transport Salaried Staffs' Association

## Public ownership of Britain's railways

- 1 This Conference opposes the continued privatisation of Britain's railways which have allowed the private sector to extract significant profits at the expense of tax payers and passengers whilst threatening the jobs of workers.
- 2 Information published by the ORR shows that for the year 2015-16, net government support to the rail industry totalled £4.8 billion (excluding Network Rail loans) and represents double the level recorded (in real terms) of that paid in the last days of British Rail. Since privatisation, this situation has existed and taking advantage of the subsidy, firms like Virgin Trains West Coast that claim to be private sector innovators are guaranteed profits. In 2015-16 alone, Virgin West Coast made £67 million in pre-tax profits after receiving a net subsidy of £285 million, building on £518.8 million net profit extracted between 1997 and 2012.
- 3 At the same time, after allowing for inflation, rail fares have increased by 25% in real terms since 1995 whilst government policy is to increasingly push the cost of the railways onto the passenger.
- 4 As part of the government's neo liberal political dogma, they are also waging a war on staff and their unions. Nowhere more so has this been seen than in Southern where trade unions have had to defend their right to strike in the Supreme Court, whilst DfT dictat and incompetence has now led to a legal challenge from commuters.
- 5 Conference calls on the GFTU to support the People's Railway campaign and work for publicly owned and publicly accountable railway.

## Motion 12

### Transport Salaried Staffs' Association

## London Underground dispute and cuts to Transport for London's operating grant

- 1 Conference, notes that in April 2016, Mayor Boris Johnson implemented the Fit for the Future (FFtF) scheme in London Underground (LU) that saw ticket offices closed and 800 jobs lost. The Conservative Mayor's legacy has, however, been to make LU a dangerous place to work and travel. Reports from reps led to TSSA surveying station staff members with the finding that 80% of LU customer facing workers feel less safe at work because of a massive spike in cases of physical and verbal abuse towards them.
- 2 As a result, TSSA, along with RMT, have been pursuing industrial action within LU. In a series of meetings at ACAS, and with the new Labour Mayor, Sadiq Khan, the unions have secured commitments to reinstate 325 new jobs, over and above replacing existing vacancies.
- 3 The Conservative legacy remains in London. Transport for London, parent of LU, has seen its operating grant from government cut completely from 2018-19 meaning that jobs and services are put at risk as the company cuts its costs and sell assets. In a city with one of the worst pollution records in Europe and which suffers from chronic congestion, the option of cutting bus services in a city heavily dependent on public transport is now a real possibility, something that will see increased car usage and more avoidable deaths.
- 4 Conference is appalled by these issues and calls on the GFTU to support the dispute in LU and to campaign for the reinstatement of the TfL operating grant.

## Motion 13

### Association of Educational Psychologist

## Selective Education

- 1 We note with concern the intention of the Government to promote educational selection through increasing the provision of Grammar Schools.
- 2 We call upon this Conference to oppose this increase in selection at the end of Key Stage 2 as children and young people transfer to secondary education. This opposition is based on clear evidence of the negative effects of selection on the educational, psychological and social wellbeing of children and young people.





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