

## TUC's 'Equality Sat Nav'.



The TUC has researched and published a comprehensive review of trade unions' equality structures and activities.

The book, entitled 'Treading Water', is the eighth survey of equality in trade unions conducted by SERTUC, which is the TUC region responsible for London, the South East and the East of England.

'Treading Water' has gathered information and case studies from unions that represent more than ninety-four percent of trade union members in the region.

Every trade union rep or activist can use it as an 'equalities sat nav' to guide their next step or as a resource that describes ideas for positive action. Or reps can use it to assure themselves that they are not struggling alone, they have colleagues fighting similar battles from whom they can draw strength, inspiration or a little helpful advice.'

'Treading Water' is available free from SERTUC. Please contact 020 7467 1292 or email [dlewis@tuc.org.uk](mailto:dlewis@tuc.org.uk) for a copy.

*The publication is supported by the European Social Fund.*

## Regional Equality Contacts

### Equality & Diversity Committee:

**Chair:** Trevor Matty, (see Worcester & Hereford branch for contact details).

**Secretary:** Gary Williams (see Solent branch for contact details).

**Regional Secretary:** Kevin Beazer; 0117 935 0055, [southwestregion@cwu.org](mailto:southwestregion@cwu.org)

### Branch Equality Officers:

**Bournemouth & Dorset Amal:** Luke Brown; [luke.brown@unioncwu.org](mailto:luke.brown@unioncwu.org) ; office 08444849593

**Bristol & District Amal:** Deputy Equality Rep Lincoln Dookie, 07855759558; [lsdookie@hotmail.com](mailto:lsdookie@hotmail.com)

**Cornwall Amal:** Office 01872 243462

**Devon and Somerset:** Office 01392 497981

**Gloucestershire & North Wiltshire:** Les Glover, 07793461434; [l.glover@gnwb.com](mailto:l.glover@gnwb.com)

**Gloucestershire Amal:** Katy Hartland, 01452333970; [cahartland@hotmail.com](mailto:cahartland@hotmail.com) or [equalops@glosamal.co.uk](mailto:equalops@glosamal.co.uk)

**Guernsey:** Office 01481733589

**Jersey:** Office 01534 61652

**Madley C.C. & Maritime Northern:** Office 01981 512865

**Plymouth & East Cornwall:** Secretary Tony Bouch 01752494473; [tonybouchcwu@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:tonybouchcwu@yahoo.co.uk)

**Solent:** Gary Williams: 01202 511022; 07779468972; [cwusolent@btinternet.com](mailto:cwusolent@btinternet.com)

**South Devon & Cornwall:** Jennifer Forbes, 07770279607; [sd.c.jenn@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:sd.c.jenn@tiscali.co.uk)

**South West & Thames Valley:** Gill Gillett, 0117 9207098; [gill.gillett@virgin.net](mailto:gill.gillett@virgin.net)

**South West Engineering:** Pascal Mensah, Office 01179290283; [paschal.mensah@bt.com](mailto:paschal.mensah@bt.com)

**South West No.7:** Sandy Best, 01793517521; [sandybest\\_65@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sandybest_65@hotmail.co.uk)

**Swindon Supplies:** Office 01793 483330

**Wessex South Central:** Andy Rathbone, 07763458958; [andyrath@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:andyrath@hotmail.co.uk)

**Western M.T.**

**Western Counties Amal:** Jo Batt; Office 01392 250479; [buzzmi@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:buzzmi@tiscali.co.uk)

**Worcester & Hereford:** Trevor Matty, 01905752244; [tmatty@talktalk.net](mailto:tmatty@talktalk.net)



# Equality Matters

Communication Workers Union - South West Region Equality & Diversity Newsletter

## SPECIAL CONFERENCE EDITION



With my second year elected as chair for the regional equality committee we intend to move forward after stalling due to industrial action commitments last year.

We intend to develop the committee into its own entity attending all equality conferences eventually in our own right. I am confident with Gary's organisational skills & all of our commitment we shall prove to be a regular talking point in every branch across the south west.

### Trevor Matty, Chair South West Regional Equality & Diversity Committee



The South West Equality & Diversity Committee would like to send fraternal greetings to delegates and visitors to Annual and industrial Conferences.

We have produced this conference version of our regular newsletter so that you can see some of the work we are undertaking and encourage you to go back to your region and set up your own equality committee, if you haven't already.

Our aim is to provide information, news and contact details to assist branch representatives, provide equality rep's with a forum, and give every member an opportunity to find out why equality matters.

### Gary Williams, Secretary, South West Regional Equality & Diversity Committee

The South West Regional Equality & Diversity Committee plays a key part of the regional structure, alongside the Regional YAC, Women's and Retired Members committee's, but has over a number of years not been supported as well as it should be.

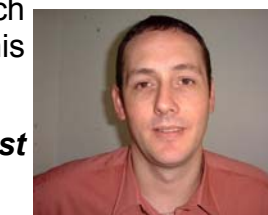
However, I am confident that following the recent AGM and election of Gary Williams [Solent Branch] as Secretary and Trevor Matty [Worcester & Hereford Branch] as Chair the committee will grow in strength and become more proactive.

Equality & Diversity is an extremely important issue and affects many of our member's lives on a daily basis. It is vital we have a structure in place to deal with such issues, assist Branches and develop the role of Branch Equality Officers.

I am confident with the Regional E&D Officers in place and with the support and assistance of Branches that we can move the Equality & Diversity debate forward. I hope Branches will do their utmost to obtain Branch E&D Officers and also ensure that every representative receives the appropriate training. This will ultimately ensure that the Unions policies and objectives are communicated to the membership.

In conclusion if you are interested in equality in your region and want to set up a regional E&D committee please contact Gary Williams or me on the contact details which are advertised within this newsletter.

### Kevin Beazer, South West Regional Secretary.



## Regional Women's Committee

## Equality & Diversity Committee

The next dates for the South West Regional Women's Committee are:

24th June; 16th September; 18th November, all start at 11am and will take place in the Regional office in Bristol.

The 24th June meeting has Trish Lavelle as guest speaker and we urge all branches to ensure their women members are aware and encourage their attendance. Men are also welcome to attend.

### Women in the CWU School 2008

A South West regional school for women members interested in becoming involved in the CWU is being arranged.

Despite the number of women members your participation in the union fails to reflect your numbers.

Any women members interested please contact the Regional Secretary, Kevin Beazer or the Regional Women's Committee Secretary, Sandy Best, contact details are on the back page.

The next Equality & Diversity Committee meeting will be at the regional office, Bristol on Wednesday 16th July, starting at 11.00 am Any dietary requirements please make the Regional Secretary aware.

All branches are required to have an equality officer, could branches ensure their equality officer/rep attends and also provide contact details of their equality officers for our newsletter.

### Priorities for 2008

The E&D Committee have set the following priorities for the year: Agree a Regional Equality Best Practice Plan; investigate website/blog, consider motions for next equality conferences and annual conference.

Any comments or articles welcome, contact the Secretary, Gary Williams, details on back page. Any member wishing to receive this newsletter direct can either request a pdf version emailed to them or a hard copy in the post. Just provide your contact details, in confidence.

## SEX DISCRIMINATION ACT CHANGES

Legal changes to bring the *Sex Discrimination Act* in line with the *European Equal Treatment Directive* finally came into force in April.

The High Court ordered the changes in March 2007 after the Equal Opportunities Commission successfully applied for a judicial review, arguing that the government had not properly implemented the directive.

The law now defines sexual harassment as unwanted conduct "that is related to [the victim's] sex or that of another person" (instead of simply "on the ground of his/her sex"). This will make it easier for individuals to bring claims when someone is making generalised sexist comments that are offensive but not directed at them personally, or are made in front of a mixed audience.

Additionally, employers' liability has been extended to harassment by third parties. This

means anyone who is not the employer or a fellow employee — for example, customers in a restaurant or contractors from another company.

Where harassment has occurred more than once (whether by the same person or different people), and the employer knows this but has not taken steps to prevent it, the employer will be legally responsible.

Other changes remove the need for a comparator in cases of maternity or pregnancy discrimination, and make it clear that a woman on maternity leave is entitled to pay increases relating to a period before she went on that leave.

The *Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (Amendment) Regulations 2008* are available at [www.opsi.gov.uk/](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/)

*Reprinted from an article in the April edition of Labour Research Department newsletter.*

## IDAHO Day - "Today the CWU Remembers You"

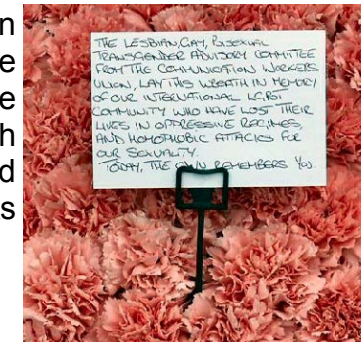
Events were held across the country on Saturday 17th May to mark International Day Against Homophobia. In London, members of the CWU laid a wreath outside the Iranian Embassy in memory of the countless gay men and women executed because of their sexuality. At the last count there are still 86 countries that legitimise persecution of LGBT people in some way, shape or form.

The London Hotel, Southampton held a fundraising event and in Bournemouth volunteers in the town centre handed out lollypops with 'HOMOPHOBIA SUCKS' on them. In Exeter a picnic was arranged, in Plymouth a

float took part in the Lord Mayor's Day Parade and in Bath there was a stall outside the University library and a 2 minute's silence whilst blindfolded to remember those who face torture for being gay, or live in fear of this every day.

17th May was chosen in commemoration of the day in 1990 that the World Health Organisation removed homosexuality from its list of mental illnesses.

*Left: CWU wreath*



## Unions are urged to adopt social model of disability

A new TUC guide wants unions to review their rules, practices and structures to ensure that their approaches to promoting disability equality are in line with the "social model". *Trade unions, disabled members and the social model* says unions should be careful that they do not, "by accident or omission, fall below the high standards needed to maintain the position [they] are rightly claiming as leaders of disability equality".

According to the social model, it is the barriers —both physical and attitudinal — that prevent disabled people from participating fully and equally in society. In contrast, the medical model blames disabled people's impairments for their unequal treatment and lack of participation. The guide emphasises that, because differences between the social and medical models have "far-reaching practical consequences", the matter is more than "a philosophical debate" for unions.

For many years the all-pervasive medical model viewed disabled people as pitiful objects of charity — or, if disabled people "managed despite everything to succeed in their careers and lives", they were seen as "heroic figures overcoming their 'defects' (not the barriers) by superhuman effort". While the situation has improved since disabled people themselves began to challenge these stereotypes, the

medical/charity model "continues to dominate popular awareness and the media continues to promote this image relentlessly". And the law remains "founded in a medical model of disability".

Unions themselves are not immune to this tendency; the guide praises the important role they have played in promoting inclusivity, with disabled members at the forefront of union initiatives and policy-making, but it notes that the influence of the traditional medical approach "creeps into some union activities and views" from time to time.

To build on current work promoting disability equality, the TUC advises unions to adopt measures such as formally adopting the social model in their rules and policies, offering reps and staff training to understand the social model means, and involving disabled members more in union structures. They should also be involved, it says, in reviews of policies and practices. This could include examining language and imagery in union publications, websites and recruitment materials, and examining how unions carry out disability monitoring; adopting the social model means replacing questions about impairments with requests for respondents to self-define.

*Trade unions, disabled members and the social model* is available from the TUC website: [www.tuc.org.uk/equality](http://www.tuc.org.uk/equality)