

**TIGMOO.co.uk**

**BLOG**



**GUIDE TO UNION  
BLOGGING 2010**

Published by [TIGMOO.co.uk](http://TIGMOO.co.uk)  
The network for union blogs and bloggers

## What is TIGMOO?

TIGMOO.co.uk is an aggregator service for blogs about trade unions and unionism in the UK. By visiting just one site, or subscribing to one RSS feed, you can stay up to date with dozens of different opinions on union matters every day.

The network currently includes more than 150 blogs, by or about the UK labour movement. The site scans them all automatically for new content every hour and publishes a feed of links directly into their stories, as well as Tweets from network members' Twitter accounts.

'TIGMOO' is affectionate insider slang for the labour movement "This Great Movement Of Ours", and the site hopes to contribute to the labour movement by helping build an online environment where more people are encouraged to talk publicly about their union involvement.

## The top 25 union blogs

This guide is a play on Total Politics magazine's annual Guide to Political Blogs, which ranks hundreds of blogs from across the political spectrum.

The blogs in the TIGMOO network have been ranked by four equally weighted factors: Traffic ratings (generated by Alexa.com), number of posts in the last 8 weeks, comments in that time, and inbound links, as found by Google.

Of course, these measures have a huge margin of error, and of course measuring quantity doesn't necessarily predict quality, though all 25 listed here are certainly well worth a read.

So we are very proud to present this year's top 25 trade union blogs, from TIGMOO.co.uk (*last year's place in the top 25 in brackets*).

### 1: ToUChstone (2)

The TUC's public policy group blog, offering current affairs comment by the organisation's policy staffers and guest contributors. Having probably the largest blogging team of any union blog pays off in terms of content and readership. [www.touchstoneblog.org.uk](http://www.touchstoneblog.org.uk)

### 2: John's Labour blog (1)

Finally deposed after two years at the TIGMOO top spot, this one-man blog by a UNISON convenor has a strong focus on Labour party activism through the UNISON Labour Link and on developments for union pensions activists. [grayee.blogspot.com](http://grayee.blogspot.com)

### 3: Stronger Unions (7)

Another TUC group blog, largely written by the TUC's Organising Team, this one reports on trends in unions and organising. [www.strongerunions.org](http://www.strongerunions.org)

### 4: The WGGB Blog (3)

This frequently updated site from the Writers' Guild of Great Britain discusses industry news. [writersguild.blogspot.com](http://writersguild.blogspot.com)

### 5: Jon's union blog (6)

UNISON NEC member reporting back on his work, as well as discussing wider union and political issues. [jonrogers1963.blogspot.com](http://jonrogers1963.blogspot.com)

### 6: Labour and capital (5)

Former union staffer turned investment analyst writing on economics, governance and pensions from a labour movement perspective. [labourandcapital.blogspot.com](http://labourandcapital.blogspot.com)

### 7: Rene Lavanchy's Blog (10)

Tribune Magazine reporter's often illuminating inside-the-beltway briefings on unions and UK politics. [renelavanchy.wordpress.com](http://renelavanchy.wordpress.com)

**8: Johnninit (9)**

Union staffer on international unions' use of new media.

[www.johnninit.co.uk](http://www.johnninit.co.uk)

**9: Green Party Trade Union Group (23)**

Highlighting developments in trades unions and the environment.

[gptublog.blogspot.com](http://gptublog.blogspot.com)

**10: Ian's Unite Site (18)**

Unite EC member writes on engineering and IT sector issues.

[www.iansunitesite.org.uk](http://www.iansunitesite.org.uk)

**11: Eric Lee (13)**

Labourstart.org founder writes about unions using technology and international solidarity.

[www.ericlee.me.uk](http://www.ericlee.me.uk)

**12: Heather Wakefield @ PF blog (new entry)**

UNISON national officer writing a column on local government as part of a trade mag blog.

[opinion.publicfinance.co.uk](http://opinion.publicfinance.co.uk)

**13: Jeremy Dear (14)**

NUJ General Secretary reports on his work and comments on media and current affairs.

[jeremydear.blogspot.com](http://jeremydear.blogspot.com)

**14: UNISON Active (new entry)**

Prolific grassroots blog, with current affairs and comment aimed at UNISON members.

[unisonactive.blogspot.com](http://unisonactive.blogspot.com)

**15: Unions Together (new entry)**

Campaigning blog from Labour Party union grouping TULO.

[unionstogether.org.uk/blog](http://unionstogether.org.uk/blog)

**16: Union Futures (8)**

Group blog with regular and opinionated news on union and political activism.

[unionfutures.blogspot.com](http://unionfutures.blogspot.com)

**17: Port of Felixstowe Unite (11)**

Workplace rep with branch news and wider comment on shipping issues.

[Pofunite.blogspot.com](http://Pofunite.blogspot.com)

**18: CWU Youth blogs (new entry)**

Independent group blog run by the union's young members' section.

[www.cwuyouth.org](http://www.cwuyouth.org)

**19: Save Vestas jobs! Save the planet! (4)**

This 2009 dispute blog continues the wider campaign for green jobs.

[savevestas.wordpress.com](http://savevestas.wordpress.com)

**20: Rights for Interns (new entry)**

TUC campaign blog, documenting news on UK internships.

[www.rightsforinterns.org.uk](http://www.rightsforinterns.org.uk)

**=21: Ian Manborde (27)**

Union educator discusses learning, skills and organisation in this long running blog.

[ianmanborde.blogspot.com](http://ianmanborde.blogspot.com)

**=21: PCS Euston Branch (21)**

Workplace, branch and wider news for PCS members at HMRC in Euston.

[pcseuston.wordpress.com](http://pcseuston.wordpress.com)

**=21: John McD's union blog (10)**

UNISON convenor updates on his activities and views.

[johnmcdsunionblog.blogspot.com](http://johnmcdsunionblog.blogspot.com)

**24: Cyberunions (new entry)**

Union staffer makes the case for greater union engagement with technology.

[cyberunions.org](http://cyberunions.org)

**25: Gail Cartmail (new entry)**

Unite AGS on current affairs and her election campaign.

[www.gailcartmail.com](http://www.gailcartmail.com)

## 2009/10 in union blogs

This is the third guide to union blogging, and hearteningly (if perhaps unsurprisingly, given the UK blogosphere's relentless onwards march) it reflects a continually expanding scene for the labour movement.

As good unionists all know, there's strength in numbers, and it seems union group blogs have become more popular in the last year, with entries in the top 25 from the TUC, CWU, UNISON activists and more. Sharing the load by getting more writers on board can help keep blogs more up to date and better moderated, and introduces a wider range of perspectives to keep things interesting.

Another promising development in the last year has been more union voices appearing as guests on otherwise non-union blogs. Union policy staff and activists are now frequent guest columnists on major left blogs like Liberal Conspiracy, Left Foot Forward or Labour List. Unions are taking advantage of larger blogs to raise awareness and gain new readers.

More trade unionists are also blogging on trade blogs, such as Unite AGS Tony Burke writing the Unite Viewpoint blog column for Print Week, or UNISON Local Government lead Heather Wakefield (amongst others) guesting regularly on Public Finance magazine's blog. Making use of established specialist blogs like this is a great way to take the message direct to members, and potential members, in key sectors.

Many larger blogs are continually on the look out for interesting syndicated content, and unionists at different levels of the movement could have a lot to offer national, trade, or local media blogs.

Twitter and other forms of social media are becoming increasingly popular ways to find and share new blog content, and many union blogs now have related Twitter accounts. In fact, we've started listing them at Tig-moo.co.uk, where you can see a feed of latest tweets on the home page.

Twitter and other social media may be hitting blogging in terms of quantity of updates. The number of actively updated blogs is up on last year, but the average number of posts per blog looks to be slightly down. Partly this could be a case of there being only so many social media hours in the day, but other services like Twitter are also likely more of a complement than a replacement for blogging. Bloggers have a wider range of social media tools to choose now, tailoring the tools to the message and situation.

The last year has also seen a wider range of bloggers come online. General Secretary blogs aren't as thick on the ground, and more national officers have taken up the keyboard, using blogs to talk about their own particular sector or specialism. Union internal groupings have also taken up blogs to help co-ordinate online.

With the Conservative/Liberal coalition in power, and the growing outcry around the severe cuts planned to public services and spending, left online activism may be about to experience a period of greatly increased interest. As left voices grow in the blogosphere, unions have an opportunity to engage with much larger online audiences than we've seen in recent years.

2010/11 could see some pretty significant developments for union blogs.

If you have a union related blog, or are thinking of starting one, why not join the network? Visit [www.tigmoo.co.uk](http://www.tigmoo.co.uk) and let us know what you are doing. By linking together we can create a bigger union blogging community and help support all UK union bloggers.