

THE connected REP

From the TUC

Using information technology in your union work

```
http://www.union-reps.org/information {  
  http://plus = your search = technology  
  return value  
  if (information_technology > 2)  
    offset = union work + reps  
  if (connected) {  
    connected += result union  
    result = reflect
```



Top links

featuring a handy
directory of many
key websites ...



Introduction

Whether it's in researching legislation, connecting with other reps, or distributing union material to members, the internet is becoming ever more important to the work of the UK's 220,000 trade union reps.



Jess Hurd, reportdigital.co.uk

A 2004 survey found that 66 per cent of reps were using the internet more than twice a week, and numbers continue to grow as more take up broadband connections at home, or gain internet access at work.

It's a challenge for us all, as unions and their reps won't have the budgets of employers for getting involved in online communications, but there is a lot that we can do, using the same commitment to our members that we demonstrate every day offline.

We've put together this short guide to introduce reps to some of the services, which are out there to help them in their roles. You'll also find a handy directory of union related web links, to give you suggestions on where to look to solve a particular problem.

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Brendan Barber". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brendan Barber
TUC General Secretary

(see my blog at www.tuc.org.uk/bbblog !)

unionreps.org.uk

Being a rep can be a lonely job, with 40 per cent of unionised workplaces having only one person to cover the role. Help is at hand on the web though, with the unionreps.org.uk online community.



10,000 reps from nearly all of the TUC's affiliated unions use the site's discussion boards to swap ideas, and get help and support on their daily work as a rep. It's the place to make connections with new and experienced reps alike, from different workplaces, different regions of the country and different unions.



The unionreps website is a great resources for reps - particularly new ones. The information on the site allows you to increase your knowledge of workplace issues which of course increases your effectiveness as a rep

– Mel Whitter, union representative

Whatever your problem, chances are that there's someone else out there who has been there and solved that, so what are you waiting for?



www.unionreps.org.uk

Union Ideas Network

Making links between unions and the academic community, this new site is helping to start a real dialogue on the future of trade unionism in the UK. Read the latest research and share your own ideas.



www.uin.org.uk



Mark Thompson

UnionScope

New for 2007 is an ambitious project to use the web to track down exactly where unions have recognitions or membership. Unions are always more effective where large numbers of members work together, so it's crucial that new members know which is the most relevant union to join for their company or industry. This site aims to use the power of the web to help reps, members and union officers collaborate in mapping out our deals and members, in one place for the first time.

The data contributed by visitors to this new site will be used to help recommend unions to prospective members, powering services such as the workSMART unionfinder, and the TUC's Know Your Rights Line.



Jess Hurd

“This is a really exciting initiative to help unions consolidate membership in key companies and make inroads into new workplaces. It's the kind of thing that could only be done on the web”

– Paul Nowak, TUC National Organiser

Please take a few minutes to check out whether your own branch's details are logged in the database. If not, it's easy for anyone to set up an account and add the information needed to put yourselves on the map.



www.tuc.org.uk/unionscope

International campaigns

Union campaigns are increasingly cross-border efforts, and rely more and more on new communications technologies. When a union leader is detained by police in Tehran, the news is relayed within minutes to activists worldwide – and the email inboxes of Iranian officials are flooded with demands for his release.

That's a real example of the kind of thing that's now happening every day. Closer to home was the extraordinary case of Joanne Delaney, a new shop steward at Dunnes Stores in Dublin. Joanne came to work wearing a union badge, and her manager told her to remove it or be fired. She refused, and was sacked. Her union, Mandate, teamed up with LabourStart to launch a global, online campaign to reinstate her.

Not only was the company deluged with angry emails within hours, but the campaign soon had an effect in the offline world as well, with questions raised in the British, Scottish and Irish parliaments, picket lines, and leafleting at the stores. Dunnes backed down and Joanne got her job back, appearing on TV in front of her store, expressing her amazement at what had happened.



www.labourstart.org/actnow.shtml



The traditional union ideal of solidarity, combined with the new tools offered by the web and email, is extremely potent and effective. We've seen example after example of employers and governments caving into such pressure and recognising unions, signing agreements, rehiring sacked workers, and releasing jailed union officials.

It can only work when we all work together though. So when you next come across a union's campaign on the web, make sure take a moment (and it really is only a moment) to send off your messages of protest and solidarity – they really do make a difference!

– *Eric Lee, LabourStart.org*

PayWizard

PayWizard helps people find average pay rates for their industry, and could be a useful site for reps seeking to negotiate on pay. An online survey lets users enter their own information, which is fed back into the database, constantly improving its accuracy. The more people use it, the better it will get.

But it doesn't stop there. The same information is being gathered in sister projects all over the world, as part of an international academic and union project called WageIndicator.org. It hopes to compile the first accurate international pay database, which would be a great resource for unions researching the impact of international pay trends.



www.paywizard.co.uk

Pensions champions

Are your members confused by their pensions options? If so, this new online network has been created to help you. There's an easy to follow training program, complete with detailed info and online tools, which you can work through one-to-one with members, to give them a personalised pensions prescription.



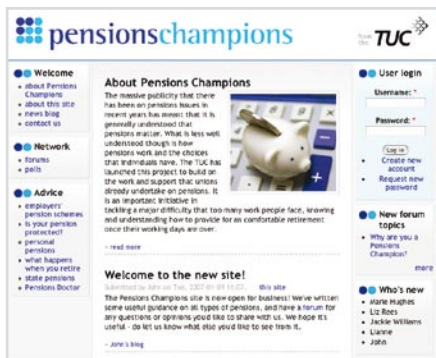
www.pensionschampions.co.uk

PayLine

Labour Research Department's database of pay and conditions includes thousands of real examples, so you can see what reps in your industry or region have been able to negotiate. It's a key resource for anyone in organising or bargaining. Check to see if your union has a subscription that you can use for it.



www.lrd.org.uk/payline





Mark Thompson

workSMART

workSMART from the TUC is a one stop shop for everything to do with your job – from legal briefings to careers guidance. The site is specifically designed to promote unions and our expertise to non members by introducing them to many of the ways a union can help them at work. And for when we have persuaded them there is a unionfinder to help match people to the most relevant union for them.

But the site is also full of information of use to reps and union members, and has been carefully written to keep it as simple and as jargon-free as possible. It should be a first stop for anyone with a question about their legal rights, health and pensions issues.

The site includes a useful company search tool, which holds financial and governance information on thousands of the largest UK companies. Find out who really owns your firm, or what the Chief Executive earned last year!



www.worksmart.org.uk

Hazards

The award winning *Hazards* magazine is the first place to look for news, campaigns and practical resources on workplace safety, and their website is just as useful for anyone with responsibilities for health and safety. Stay one step ahead at



www.hazards.org

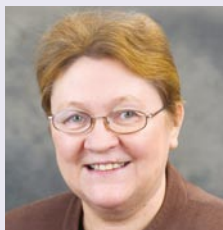
unionlearn

unionlearn was launched in 2006, offering a new and exciting service for trade union representatives. We offer reps support and guidance about the world of learning and the training opportunities available to them.

The site makes available key materials, resources and publications, many of which are free. A library of case studies showcases reps' learning achievements, offering inspiration and encouragement to other reps who might be in a similar situation.

Our online course directory lists a wide range of specialist training courses for union reps and officers. It sorts through hundreds of TUC training courses to help reps find the right course for them, at the most convenient local training centre. If reps find it difficult to travel to a training course they can even take many of the courses online from home.

 www.unionlearn.org.uk



Jess Hurd

The unionlearn website contains a wealth of information and advice to help reps be more effective in the workplace. The website is the place to find up to the minute news, views and articles.

– Liz Smith, unionlearn Director

Leisure

After all that, you might be forgiven for thinking the web's nothing but work. Here are some of our favourite sites for a workplace wind-down:

Why the long face?

Community made this short animation to promote their Bookies' Rights organising campaign in betting shops, with a simple message which potential members can send on to their colleagues to spread the word. Watched by tens of thousands of people so far, it's hardly your run-of-the-mill union recruitment pitch! See it at



www.respectatladbrokes.com/funstuff.html

Dilbert.com

Most of the situations in this long running cartoon series will be familiar to trade unionists – random acts of bureaucracy and dodgy management decisions blight the lives of cubicle worker Dilbert and his colleagues. Get your daily fix at



www.dilbert.com



The union makes us strong

This ambitious history site from London Metropolitan University's TUC archives has a wealth of photos, literature and memorabilia from over a century of trade unionism. Reading key documents in their original format will be invaluable to labour movement scholars, and really helps today's unionists feel connected to our shared history. Step back in time at



www.unionhistory.info



Get connected Directory

You might find some of these sites useful for your work. We've categorised them into different themes. Apologies to any organisations we've left out, but it's very hard to cover everything, so don't forget to use a good search engine too!

Unions

Accord

www.accord-myunion.org

ACM www.acm.uk.com

AEP www.aep.org.uk

AFA www.afalhr.org.uk

ALGUS www.algus.org.uk

Amicus

www.amicustheunion.org

ANGU www.angu.org.uk

ASLEF www.aslef.org.uk

Aspect www.aspect.org.uk

ATL www.atl.org.uk

BACM-TEAM

www.bacmteam.org.uk

BALPA www.balpa.org.uk

BDA www.bda.uk.com

BECTU www.bectu.org.uk

BFAWU www.bfawu.org

BIOS www.orthoptics.org.uk

BSU www.britanniasu.org.uk

CDNA www.cdna.tvu.ac.uk

Community

www.community-tu.org

Connect www.connectuk.org

CSP www.csp.org.uk

CWU www.cwu.org

CYWU www.cywu.org.uk

EIS www.eis.org.uk

Equity www.equity.org.uk

FBU www.fbu.org.uk

FDA www.fda.org.uk

GMB www.gmb.org.uk

HCSA www.hcsa.com

MU

www.musiciansunion.org.uk

NAPO www.napo.org.uk

NASUWT

www.teachersunion.org.uk

NAUTILUS UK

www.nautilusuk.org

NGSU www.ngsu.org.uk

NUJ www.nuj.org.uk

NUM www.num.org.uk

NUT www.teachers.org.uk

PCS www.pcs.org.uk

PFA www.givemefootball.com

POA(UK) www.poauk.org.uk

Prospect

www.prospect.org.uk

RMT www.rmt.org.uk

SCP www.feetforlife.org

SoR www.sor.org

T&G www.tgwu.org.uk

TSSA www.tssa.org.uk

UCAC www.athrawon.com

UCATT www.ucatt.org.uk

UCU www.ucu.org.uk

Unison www.unison.org.uk

Unity

www.unitytheunion.org.uk

URTU www.urtu.com
USDAW www.usdaw.org.uk
WGGB www.writersguild.org.uk

Union organisations

Certification Officer
www.certoffice.org
GFTU www.gftu.org.uk
STUC www.stuc.org.uk
TUC www.tuc.org.uk
TULO www.unionstogether.org.uk
Union Ideas Network
www.uin.org.uk
Unions21
www.unions21.org.uk

Economy

Companies House
www.companieshouse.gov.uk
Confederation of British Industry
www.cbi.org.uk
Department of Trade and Industry www.dti.gov.uk
Incomes Data Services
www.incomesdata.co.uk
National Office of Statistics
www.statistics.gov.uk
New Economics Foundation
www.neweconomics.org
PayWizard www.paywizard.co.uk
Work Foundation
www.theworkfoundation.com

Environment

Carbon Trust
www.carbontrust.co.uk

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
www.defra.gov.uk
Friends of the Earth
www.foe.co.uk
Sustainable Workplace
www.sustainableworkplace.co.uk

Equalities

Age Concern
www.ageconcern.org.uk
Age Positive
www.agepositive.gov.uk
Commission for Racial Equality
www.cre.gov.uk
Disability Alliance
www.disabilityalliance.org.uk
Disability Rights Commission
www.drc-gb.org
Discrimination Law Association
www.discrimination-law.org.uk
Unite Against Fascism
www.uaf.org.uk
Equal Opportunities Commission
www.eoc.org.uk

Get online

e-Unions www.e-unions.org
Labourstart www.labourstart.org.uk
tigmoo www.tigmoo.co.uk
unionweb www.unionweb.co.uk

Health and safety

Hazards Magazine
www.hazards.org
Health and Safety Executive
www.hse.gov.uk
IOSH www.iosh.org.uk
RoSPA www.rospa.com

Law at work

Citizens Advice

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

DirectGov employment rights

www.direct.gov.uk/employment

Employment Appeal Tribunal

www.employmentappeals.gov.uk

Employment Tribunals service

www.employmenttribunals.gov.uk

Information Commissioner

www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Institute of Employment Rights

www.ier.org.uk

Law Centers Federation

www.lawcentres.org.uk

Public Concern at Work

www.pcaw.co.uk

Trade Union Group of MPs

www.tugroup.net

workSMART www.worksmart.org.uk

UK Parliament www.parliament.uk

Learning

Apprenticeships

www.apprenticeships.org.uk

Basic Skills Agency

www.basic-skills.co.uk

Department for Education and Skills

www.dfes.gov.uk

LearnDirect www.learndirect.co.uk

Learning and Skills Council

www.lsc.gov.uk

Move On www.move-on.org.uk

Open University

www.open.ac.uk/union

unionlearn www.unionlearn.org.uk

Workers' Educational Association

www.wea.org.uk

Organising and bargaining

ACAS www.acas.org.uk

Central Arbitration Committee

www.cac.gov.uk

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development

www.cipd.org.uk

International Centre for Trade Union Rights

www.ictur.org

Investors in People UK

www.ipuk.co.uk

Labour Research Department

www.lrd.org.uk

Partnership Institute

www.partnership-institute.org.uk

Unionfinder

worksmart.org.uk/unionfinder

Pensions

Department for Work and Pensions

www.dwp.gov.uk

National Pensioners Convention

www.npcuk.org

Pensions Advisory Service

www.opas.org.uk

Pensions Champions

www.pensionschampions.co.uk

The Pensions Ombudsman

www.pensions-ombudsman.org.uk

Pensions Regulator

www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk

Work/life balance

Daycare trust

www.daycaretrust.org.uk

Work Your Proper Hours Day

www.workyourproperhoursday.com