

CONGRESS SPECIAL



GMB Southern Region are delighted to welcome delegates from all around the country to Brighton.

As well as a brief introduction to things you can look forward to and things to look out for at Congress, this edition will continue to bring you news stories and information updates

on what is going on around the region.

Since the last edition, our Reps and Officers have been working hard to win some important victories for our members and details are inside.

So welcome to the latest edition of Southern Region News and enjoy Congress!

Message from the Regional Secretary

Welcome delegates to GMB's National Congress 2018, here in Brighton. Southern Region have the pleasure of hosting members from around the country who are all descending on Sussex to have their say in the democracy of our great union.

Some of you may be an experienced head at Congress like myself, or some of you might be first time delegates but you will all experience the brotherhood and sisterhood of our delegation. To feel part of something larger is very much the essence of being a union member, and there are not many places you feel that better than at Congress. More on that inside!

One other place you might get this feeling is at a large demonstration, and I was delighted and proud to march alongside so many GMB members, with hundreds from Southern Region, at the TUC march on Saturday 12th May. To lead a delegation all determined to send a message to the Tories to end austerity and provide good, well-paid jobs and fair treatment to all workers, well that's what made me join the GMB in the first place all those years ago.

Enjoy Congress everybody!

INSIDE:

- Congress 2018 - what you can expect
- Upcoming Events
- Steve Reed MP addresses Regional Council
- Thanks Barbara and Kathy!
- Big win for NSL Parking members in Wandsworth
- GMB win recognition in CRBE at Royal Berkshire Hospital



Paul Maloney, Regional Secretary

Big wins for NSL Parking members!

GMB and the workplace reps have won an agreement tying NSL in to the London Living Wage of £10.20 per hour plus allowances, a significant increase over their previous earnings. Most GMB members also received up to £800 in back pay in their March pay packets. Going forward the contract will pay the updated London Living Wage every time it is uplifted until the contract is up.

Build our ships in Britain!

A GMB delegation of Shipbuilding workers Representatives from around the UK held a Parliamentary lobby at Westminster on 25th April. This was chaired by GMB National Officer Ross Murdoch and BAE Portsmouth was represented by activists from Southampton Z42 branch.

Politicians including the Shadow Defence Secretary Nia Griffith, and Admiral Lord West of Spithead amongst many other MPs spoke in strong support for the three 40,000 tonne FSS ships to be built in the UK using an alliance similar to that which has successfully delivered the Aircraft Carrier order.

Bryan Hulley, GMB Organiser says, "It's time for the Tory Portsmouth MPs to stand up and be counted and throw their full weight behind the campaign and to be very vocal publicly about it. If we are to remain a manufacturing nation post-Brexit then it would be utter madness not to have them built in the UK."

Thanks Barbara and Kathy!

Barbara Plant and Kathy Abubakir were presented with flowers at the last Regional Council meeting as a token of thanks for all their hard work in setting up our Regional Equality Forum. Kathy and Barbara were instrumental in establishing our REF as an effective tool to promote equality among all strands and throughout all aspects of the region's working life, and they have now decided to stand down from the forum to allow new delegates to inject in some new ideas. GMB Southern are grateful for their invaluable input over the years and are sorry to lose their wealth of experience and knowledge.



GMB recognition for CBRE in Berkshire

The facilities management workers at Royal Berks are in the middle of negotiating a new GMB recognition agreement for all CBRE workers at the hospital.

This follows a ballot which CBRE requested we hold in the workplace to assess workers' support for GMB recognition. The result was 100% in favour from a 70% turnout.

The GMB expect voluntary recognition to be agreed and in place within the next few weeks.

NHS Trust bars access to members

Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has decided not to allow the GMB to meet with members at their hospitals.

The Trust covering 3 hospitals Worthing Hospital; Southlands Hospital, Shoreham-by-Sea and St Richard's Hospital in Chichester, who refuse to recognise the GMB locally, have now also refused to allow us to meet with staff.

GMB Southern Region are fighting this decision, so watch this space for further updates!

Welcome to Congress!

Upcoming Events

Whether this is your first Congress or if you have been to many before, you still get that same feeling when you walk into the hall. This is the very essence of Trade Unionism - of letting members decide how their union operates and of allowing members to have their say in its running.

But if it is your first time, what can you expect? Firstly, long days. Congress may have the power to inspire but is also never fails to tire! You will be sat in the Congress Hall for a few hours every

day, listening to and supporting your colleagues. Make sure you take advantage of all breaks to stretch your legs!

Secondly, camaraderie. If it's your first time speaking, you'll be amazed at how much support you get when you step up to talk!

Thirdly, expect fun! You should take every opportunity to meet, talk to and maybe have a beer with colleagues from other regions. They might even have some great organising ideas you can borrow!

GMB Southern Region has a number of events coming up throughout the summer to which you are invited and welcome. Some of these include:

THE TOLPUDDLE FESTIVAL

LONDON PRIDE

BRIGHTON PRIDE

And many more. To find out more about these, when and where they are, and how you can attend or get involved, visit our regional facebook page and check out our Events!

Dispute brewing at Creative Support Care Homes

Workers in Slough have given a short reprieve to management from the indicative industrial action ballot they had scheduled for 13th April, in response to a last-minute improved offer being made by the bosses this week.

Workers are resisting consultative plans by Creative Support to make cuts to sick pay and anti-social hours payments that would

leave some workers around £400 per month out of pocket.

GMB have made the employer aware that members will be considering sustained industrial action to fight this move and formal industrial action balloting may well be taking place in the next few weeks for members at Northampton Place and The Pines in Slough.

GMB fight Thames Ambulance over National Committee

Thames Ambulance (TASL) are looking to stifle the GMB's ability to raise disputes by and for members through the setting up of a national JNC combining various workplaces.

GMB believes that doing so is often not in the best interest of our members, and we further believe that the employer is simply trying to avoid dealing with matters which our members are rightly fighting.

GMB Southern Thames Ambulance members will agree to national bargaining when all TASL staff T&C's are based on a national basis on national NHS terms and conditions, as only then will any Union or employer national discussion mirror a real national employer.

Have you got an event that you would like us to advertise?

GMB Southern will consider all requests for us to try to secure an attendance at your event. Whether it is a community event, a charity event, or a demonstration to highlight a workplace or political cause, do get in touch with us to see if we can help you.

Have you attended an event with or on behalf of GMB? Why not send us any photos or videos you may have taken on the day. They might end up on our website or even in the next newsletter!

Steve Reed MP speaks at Regional Council

Things to do in Brighton

Seni Lewis was a 23 year old man who lived with his parents in Thornton Heath. He was taken to hospital and transferred to a mental health hospital, where he became anxious and tried to leave. Seni was restrained by staff and then by eleven police officers, before he suffered a heart attack and lost consciousness. Seni died shortly afterwards. Seni's MP, Steve Reed came to speak to GMB Southern's Regional Council about Seni and a law he is pushing to establish in Seni's memory.

"A new law to make police and medics more accountable for the use of force in mental health units is vital if we're to avoid a repeat of the Seni Lewis tragedy" says Steve. "Seni's Law is a major step towards ensuring mental health patients are treated with care and compassion, not cruelty."

GMB Southern's Regional Political Officer Michelle Gordon said, "We thank Steve for coming to speak to our Regional Council about Seni's law. While of course we hope this law will protect service users from such a tragedy befalling them, we also hope that our members who work with vulnerable service users will be protected too, and that a safety net will be provided for our members who do such a difficult job, often for very low wages."



As your host region, we are well placed to recommend things to see and do around Brighton. You'll be busy throughout the days, but the evenings are your own to explore what this part of West Sussex has to offer!

Firstly, every visitor to Brighton should make a beeline for the pier. Once the centre of Victorian entertainment, you can still walk out on to the sea for free, and enjoy fish and chips, ice cream, arcade games and kiss me quick hats. Maybe even brave a trip on one of the fairground rides!

The Brighton Pavilion is one of the iconic buildings in the town. Formerly a royal residence in Victorian times, it is now open to visitors and hosts a museum.

There are more modern attractions to visit too - the Aquarium is a good way to spend a couple of hours or venture up the i360 for panoramic views of the city.

Lastly, why not get lost in the windy passages of Brighton's iconic The Lanes district? There is something for everyone here, boutique shops, cozy cafes and lots of bars and restaurants.

GMB Southern's new website has gone live!

As you may have seen, GMB Southern's website has had a total overhaul.

We hope that you will find the new layout easier to use and navigate, and that it will be quicker and easier for you to access this information you need.

All the latest news stories will remain visible on the front page, but you should now be able to search the archived news items by key word or category. Check it out at www.gmb-southern.org.uk

The best way of staying abreast of all developments within the region and of any news stories as they come hot off the press, you should like us on Facebook (GMB Southern Region) or follow us on Twitter (@GMBSouthern).

If you have any news leads you would like us to follow, stories you would like us to publicise, or indeed any feedback on our new website, then please don't hesitate to get in touch with us using the email address below!

Do you have anything to contribute to our Regional Newsletter?

Send in any stories or photos to info@gmb.org.uk or look us up on Facebook or Twitter