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ANNUAL REPORT

The relaunch after the pandemic in 2020

A relaunch meeting took place on 11th January. Twelve Trade unionists attended. It was agreed to set up an interim committee tasked to arrange elections for a broader committee.

The interim committee was elected.

Chair Graham Croucher

Secretary Anjona Roy

Treasurer Bob Ansell

It was also agreed to organise a March through Northampton on Saturday 11th March.



ELECTION OF THE FULL COMMITTEE

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Election of the full committee

On February 22nd there was a further meeting. At this meeting there were elections of the committee.

The Committee that were elected were:

Chair Graham Croucher

Vice Chair Russell Hickman

Secretary Anjona Roy*

Treasurer Bob Ansell

Assistant Treasurer Paul Draper

General Duties Committee Members

Titus Ajayi

Sam Cook

Sonya Andermahr

*Stan Quirey Assistant Secretary. Elected August 2023

PLACARD MAKING

It was agreed to organise a placard making session on 1st March. This produced not only a number of placards, many of which were used on pickets and demonstrations throughout the year, but also a number of promotional videos of the planned march through Northampton.

<https://www.facebook.com/NorthamptonTUC/videos/1202706003784969>





MARCH THROUGH NORTHAMPTON ON 11TH MARCH

Speakers included:

- Andrea Egan UNISON National President
- John Castle ASLEF
- Lee Barron Midlands TUC
- Emma Roberts Local Food bank Activist
- Graham Croucher NTUC Chair
- Charli Clarke Croucher School student

<https://www.facebook.com/NorthamptonTUC/videos/923140072217995>

PLAYING OUR PART IN TUC STRUCTURES

Northampton Trades Union Council sent a delegate to the Midlands TUC Annual Conference 25th March. The delegate was Anjona Roy and she presented a written report to the following meeting of the trades council.

We also had a member attending each monthly online meeting of the WEA Trade Unions branch which is open to union members from all over the country.

TRADES COUNCIL SOLIDARITY

Solidarity With Other Trades Councils

Our newly reformed Trades Union Council has formed links and expressed solidarity with neighbouring Trades Councils including:

Wisbech, March and District Trade Union Council

Peterborough Trades Council

We offered support and solidarity to those trying to re-form Corby Trades Council.

We wish you the best in your campaign for equality and workers' rights and your efforts to forge links between workplace and community

#Solidarity #Co-operation #JoinAUnion #Workers
#PowerInAUnion



Sincere thanks to Wisbech, March & District

Trades Union Council for their #Solidarity greetings on our re-formation

LINKS WITH LOCAL UNIONS

The Trades council sent out 25 emails with details of campaigns and opportunities for local people to express solidarity to those workers taking industrial action over 2023.

Our email mailing list grew to 291 contacts.

We encouraged cross union solidarity to the following unions taking industrial action over 2023.

ASLEF BMA GMB NEU PCS

RMT UCU NUJ UNISON

We designed and issued solidarity graphics to promote the actions unions were taking and to encourage others to go and express solidarity or send a message of support.



Message of support
from
Northampton Trades
Union Council
#Solidarity in your
struggles challenging your
employers sanctions on
your marking and
assessment boycott



Local Strike Action!

#defendtherighttostrike
#PayUp #Solidarity
#Protectthenhs
#Unionsolidarity

@nationaleducationunion
Thursday 27th April and
Tuesday 2nd May 2023.
<https://neu.org.uk/pay-strike-action-faq>

@pcsunion
Friday 28th April 8am -10am
Driver and Vehicle
Standards Agency centre on
Gladstone Road,
Northampton NN5 7QA

@thercn Sunday 8pm 30th
April

Details of picket lines on
<https://strikemap.org/>



The Trades Council also contributed to a minibus to take local trade unionists to a GMB picket outside Amazon BHX4 warehouse.

“The banners raised. Amazon sent the workers home early and scrapped the night shift to try to undermine the impact on their workers. The GMB strikers came back to speak at the rally.”



MASS RALLY 

SOLIDARITY WITH THE AMAZON STRIKERS

5PM, SATURDAY 5 AUGUST

BHX4 WAREHOUSE, LYONS PARK, SAYER DRIVE, COVENTRY, CV1

SUPPORTERS SO FAR

- Coventry Trades Council
- Goldsmiths UCU
- Manchester Trades Council
- Bristol University Union
- Harrow Trades Council
- Unite North West Service Industries
- North Staffordshire Trades Council
- Manchester Leftist Action
- Unite 7055 Road Haulage
- Newcastle Trades Council
- Luton Trades Council
- Open University UCU
- Northampton Trades Council
- Unite Northants Central

STRIKE MAP 



TICKET OFFICE CLOSURE PROPOSALS CAMPAIGN

The government proposed a new grade that would consolidate the role of conductor/guard, platform staff and ticket office staff. This would have meant that ticket offices in all but a few major stations would close and an extension to driver only operation on Britain's trains. This was fiercely contested by both ASLEF and RMT.

The RMT launched a very visible nationwide campaign – Save Our Ticket Offices– that caught the imagination of the British public. In the public consultation, 750,000 responses were received, the vast majority opposing the closures. In late 2023 the government decided to scrap the idea and Britain's railway ticket offices were saved.

Northampton Trade Union Council passed a motion in support of the RMT campaign and, led by Assistant Secretary, Stan Quirey, attended many rallies at stations including Rugby, Northampton, Kettering, Milton Keynes and even Birmingham. We were also very visible at the picket lines of both RMT and ASLEF, handing out leaflets and postcards to a concerned, often unaware and mostly supportive general public.

Activism can be lonely, often without reward, so it is satisfying when a national campaign results in a massive victory. This was a huge message to the public that you can change policy with solid and committed activism. We were proud to support our rail unions in such a worthy cause and feel bolstered for our participation in future campaigns.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We had stalls at the following events:

July - The Chainmakers Festival in Cradley Heath

August - The Unity Fest in Corby

August - Deanshanger Pride

September - South Asian History Month event in Leicester

TRADES COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND POLITICAL EDUCATION

Over the course of the year, the meetings of Northampton Trades Union Council have had discussion on the following issues:

- TUC pensioners network bus campaign.
- Affiliation to Strikemap
- Received an address by Sarah Wooley General Secretary of BFAWU
- Received a presentation from Sean Kettle, UNITE Regional Officer on organising trade union recognition agreements
- The campaign against the opening of a coalmine in Cumbria.
- Affiliation to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign



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COMMUNITY OUTREACH

There have been two Solidarity Saturday events held over the year. One on April 22nd and one on October 14th. The events featured refreshments, a local Black heritage walk and union stalls.

There have been six street stalls at various locations in the town including St James, Kingsley and the town centre. There was also an all day stall at the Bardic Picnic on the racecourse. The stalls have raised the profile of the Trades Council. They have also raised the profile of trade unionism in the town. Stalls have talked to members of the public who are not unionised about the benefits and opportunities of joining a union. The stalls have also been a means of engaging with existing union members about opportunities to become more active in their union by taking on the position of a steward or representative.

PAT MARKEY MEMORIAL EVENT

Long standing supporter of our Trades Union Council and past Secretary, Pat Markey from the NEU lost his life after a short illness in September 2023. We hosted an event to celebrate his life and activism. The event included contributions from NEU comrades, Ron Mendel a past Trade Union Council President.

There were also contributions from Maggie Markey and Beth Markey, his wife and daughter.

There was music from four members of the local band Donnybrook Fair appearing as The Donnybrook Four with a mix of traditional sing-along Irish style tunes. In support, from Coventry, we had Huffy-The Acoustic Punk to kick off the evening.




MEMORIAL EVENT TO REMEMBER THE ACTIVISM OF


Pat Markey


WEDNESDAY 13TH DECEMBER 2023 | 7:00 PM
THE LAB, 95-97 CHARLES ST, NORTHAMPTON NN1 3BG



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