

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY UNISON...

... represents all workers in Derbyshire's libraries and in trading standards.

This is just one small section of the branch which represents local authority workers throughout the county in such workplaces as schools, roads depots, social services offices, residential homes etc.

We also represent workers in the voluntary and private sectors working for the local community.

If you're not already in UNISON ... you should be!

TAKING STOCK ... Early Day Motion EDM 248

UNISON's continuing campaign to defend the public library service and our recently commissioned report "Taking Stock: the future of our public library service", calls on government and local authorities to adopt a five point plan to safeguard and improve our public libraries. An Early Day Motion EDM 248 was placed before Parliament on 11 December 2008 in support of our campaign.

UNISON branches and activists are urged to back this EDM and encourage their local MPs to sign up too.

That this house notes that UK libraries have made an essential contribution to the social, cultural and economic well-being of communities for the past 150 years and notes that more people in the UK visit libraries than football matches or cinemas; acknowledges that despite increased investment in the library service over the past decade, more needs to be done to keep libraries strong and central to their communities; and therefore welcomes the launch of UNISON's report 'Taking Stock: the future of our UK library service'; supports the report's five point plan for a revitalized public library service maintained and improved by adequate resourcing and public funding, including empowered staff shaping services in partnership with their local community, partnership working between libraries and councils across the UK, responsiveness to library users from all backgrounds and the provision of staff training and professional development; is confident that this fresh thinking will ensure that the library service can build on its past successes; and calls upon the Government to incorporate this plan as part of its current review of the library service.

UNISON branches and activists are urged to back this EDM and encourage their local MPs to sign up too.

<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=37249&SESSION=899>



One copy of the report has been sent to each of Derbyshire's libraries; if you want extra copies, please call the branch office.

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Derbyshire County UNISON

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Cultural & Community Services

NEWS

Your Stewards Committee Needs You!!



Due to the departure of two long standing stewards, the departmental Unison and Health and Safety Committees have vacancies.

If you are interested in sitting on either of the above, please contact any one of the stewards below or Vicki Lang at the Branch Office for an informal chat about the role and the support available. Full training will be given and you will have access to a network of more experienced stewards and Branch and Regional Officers.

We are particularly looking for volunteers in Buxton Museum, Trading Standards and the Record Office where there is no current representation.

The workplace representative is the most important link between the union and its members. Workplace representatives play a number of roles. They give members information about union issues by publicising campaigns, distributing leaflets and keeping members informed about and involved in local negotiations.

If you want to join the current team, please contact:

Marilyn Bentley @ Buxton Library - 01298 25331
John Gilman @ Long Eaton Mobile - 0115 973 5426 or 07809 044405
Janet Parker @ School Library Service - 01332 0371921
Kate Sarvent @ Shirebrook Library - 01623 742425

or ring the Branch Office on 01629 582266

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COME TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING!

Please make every effort to attend one of the annual general meetings. These meetings are for you - ordinary members - not just UNISON activists.

Monday, 23rd March

7.00pm

Buxton Pavilion

St John's Road

SK17 6XN

Wednesday, 25th March

6.30pm

The Winding Wheel

Holywell Street

Chesterfield

S41 7SA

Monday, 30th March

7.00pm

The Spot

73 Saxevel Street

Derby

DE1 2JR

ONE MORE REASON TO BE IN UNISON!

I would like to draw attention to the very positive aspects of being a member of UNISON.

Recently staff at a Derbyshire library received a letter from auditors stating that they would be interviewed individually by auditors about financial procedures at the library.

The staff were alarmed and intimidated at this prospect, and immediately contacted UNISON branch office.

Two branch officers attended the interviews and gave fantastic support to the staff, who very much appreciated the union presence. This helped them to get through what was an unnerving experience.

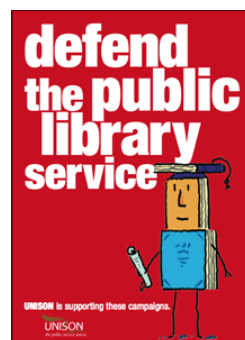
Thanks to UNISON, members felt they were not alone but among friends during this traumatic time.

The staff concerned and the UNISON stewards of the Cultural and Community Services committee would like to

record their appreciation and thanks to the branch officers concerned.

It is at times like this that one is thankful to be a member of UNISON.

Marilyn Bentley



www.librarycampaign.com



TAKING STOCK

The future of our public library service

For over 150 years, Britain's public library service has made an essential contribution to the social, educational, cultural and economic well-being of local communities throughout the country. In 2006-07, there were over 337 million visits to more than 4,700 public libraries; 315 million book issues from a total stock of 103 million books; 8.7 million issues of audio, visual or electronic items; 64 million visits to library websites and a budget of over £1 billion.

Greater demands are being made on libraries at a time when there is a squeeze on public spending. Local authorities need to ensure that the library service is not lost among the general leisure services remit of over-stretched Cabinet members and should see the network of branches as a priceless - if often underused - link with the community that the elected members serve.



The basic needs of libraries are fairly straightforward

More people visit libraries than either football matches or the cinema.

And yet despite this, the service is regarded as being in crisis. This is primarily due to the long term nature of the impact of decisions which cut expenditure, building budgets, staffing, and training. The policy of commercialisation, privatisation and cuts in public spending pursued by the Conservatives in the 1980s and 1990s resulted in falling book acquisitions, a decline in library visits and book issues and a deterioration in the building stock.

The two decades of neglect have yet to be reversed despite some additional funding since Labour came to power in 1997. Unfortunately, the government's public service reform agenda has disintegrated some of the failed ideas of the previous administration - in terms of commercialisation and contracting out. For example, without any hard evidence, the PricewaterhouseCoopers proposals recommend a programme of change which would push the library service into the orbit of the private sector and change irrevocably the character of the service.

Local people (both library users and potential users from all backgrounds) should have the opportunity to work with library staff to shape the service to suit the needs of the local community, within the context of a broader library service.

UNISON has called on the government and local authorities to adopt a five point plan to maintain and improve the library service. The basic needs of libraries are fairly straightforward. A commitment to these five broad objectives can be the beginning of a real debate on the detail and implementation.

