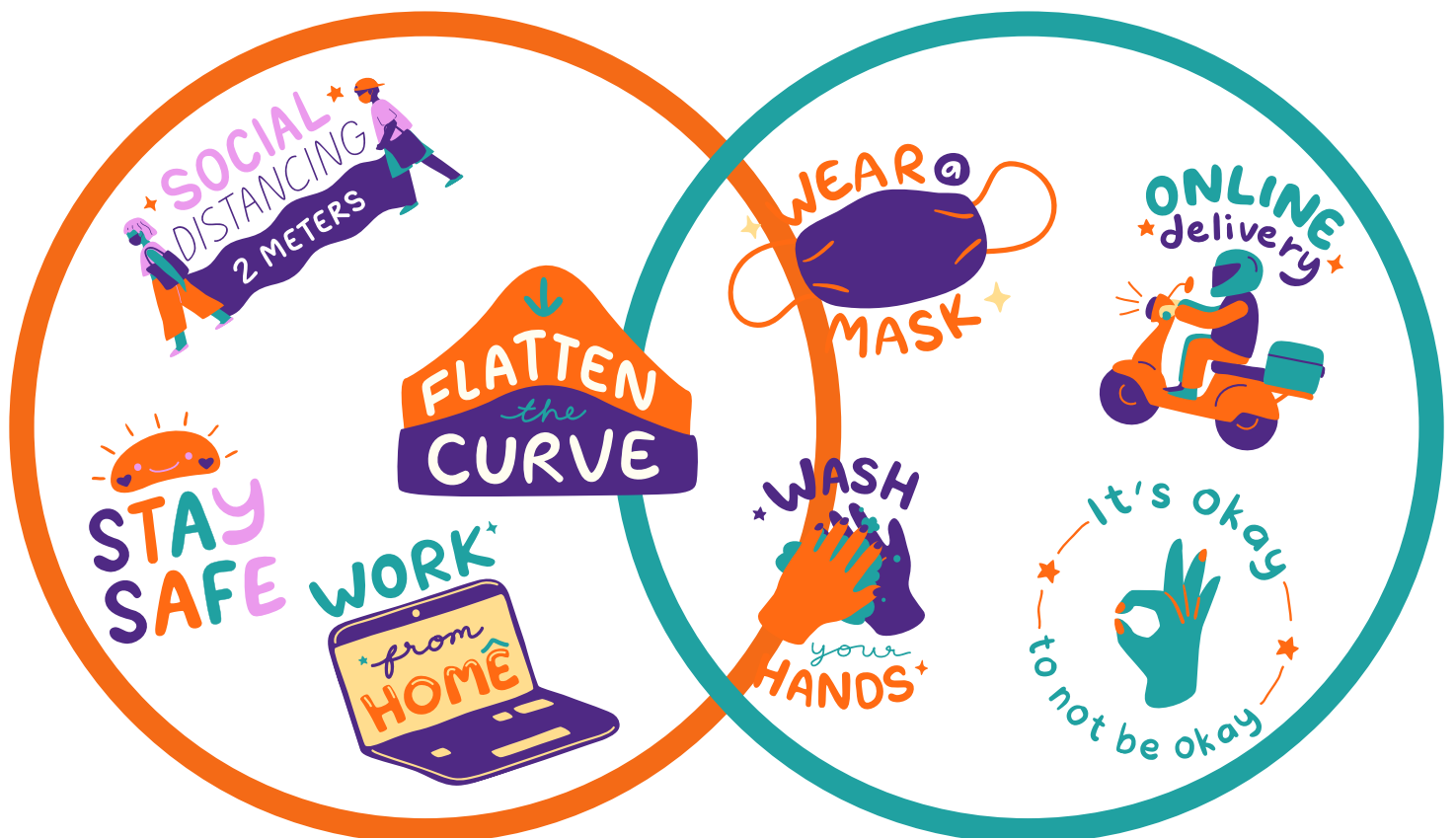


**FROM
NORMAL**



GMB London Regional Equality Conference 2021

Life After Lockdown





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AGENDA

- 09.45AM ARRIVAL ONLINE
- 10.00AM WELCOME
- 10.10AM ICE BREAKER
- 10.30AM MOTIONS 1 - 3 & ELECTIONS
- 11.00AM BREAK
- 11.15AM IN CONVERSATION WITH
SARAH OWEN MP & SAM TARRY MP
- 12.15PM LUNCH BREAK
- 13.00PM MOTIONS 4-6
- 13.30PM SOG PANEL
- 14.30PM BREAK
- 14.45PM INTRODUCTION TO WORKSHOPS
- 14.55PM WORKSHOPS - ACTION PLANNING
- 16.15PM REGIONAL EQUALITY OFFICER
- 16.30PM CLOSE



ZERO TOLERANCE

In today's modern society all form of discrimination - including intimidation and behaviour patterns, words and or actions that harm or undermine a person's well-being or career is unacceptable.

GMB will not tolerate any form of discrimination and will have no place in its organisation for those who would seek to discriminate.

GMB also hold as core principles the right to equality, dignity, and fairness in industry and society as contained within the Rule book 'Our Purpose' states: 'We will aim to end exploitation, discrimination and injustice.'

GMB policies also state that our union will not tolerate any gestures, verbal or written or electronic communication or physical act that can reasonably be perceived as being discriminatory

Any persons within GMB who are subjected to such unwanted behaviour cannot function properly and are impeded from giving our membership the high quality of service that they deserve.

Harassment and discrimination, even in their most subtle forms, directly conflicts with the law and GMB policy and will not be tolerated at any level throughout the union. No employee or member of the GMB at any level should be fearful of reporting acts of discrimination.

GMB will treat all complaints of discriminatory behaviour seriously and will independently investigate them promptly, efficiently and in confidence.

GMB is furthermore committed to promoting respect and non-discrimination through on-going training, education and awareness-raising programmes at all levels of the union lay and employee structures

This statement applies to;

GMB members

GMB post holders

GMB employees - direct or indirect workers performing functions in relation to GMB

Guest Speakers

Sarah Owen MP – Luton North

Sarah Owen is the MP for Luton North, having been elected in 2019, she is the first female MP of Chinese decent in the UK.

Sarah, has previously worked as a care worker in the NHS, a political assistant for Brighton and Hove Council as well as for the London Fire Brigade in the emergency planning department.

Most will remember Sarah as political officer for the GMB, who represented the union on the Labour Party national Executive.

Sarah wrote and led the Public Speaking Course for our GMB Sisters, following our Women's Conference.

Sarah is Chair of Chinese for Labour.

Sarah is currently the Parliamentary Private Secretary to Rachel Reeves Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer as well as a party Whip.



Sam Tarry MP – Ilford South.

Sam was also elected as an MP in 2019 for Ilford South with the support of both the GMB and Momentum. Sam was previously Chair of young Labour before working for Hope Not Hate.

Sam became a Councillor in 2010 for Chadwell Heath part of London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

Sam was the political officer for the Transport Salaried Staff Association (TSSA) up to his election as an MP and served as President of the think tank CLASS (Centre for Labour and Social Studies)

Most importantly Sam was a GMB Young London member and Political Officer of the Barking Branch

Sam currently is the Shadow Minister for Busses and Local Transport.



MOTIONS

Motion 1

CRED Report

This branch condemns the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities report in its entirety and sees it as a step backwards in the fight against racism. The dangerous narrative in the report includes "Put simply we no longer see a Britain where the system is deliberately rigged against ethnic minorities. The impediments and disparities do exist, they are varied, and ironically very few of them directly do with racism. Too often 'racism' is the catch-all explanation and can be simply implicitly accepted rather than explicitly examined. The evidence shows that geography, family influence, socio-economic background, culture and religion have more significant impact on life chances than the existence of racism.

This branch calls on the Union to campaign for further independent research into institutional racism in all aspects.

**Holborn Branch
Young London**

REF Support

Motion 2

Solidarity With Palestine

After the clashes in Jerusalem where Palestinian men and women have been brutalised by Israeli police and IDF, particularly given the storming of one of the holiest sites in the Muslim world the time is now for the GMB to mark a noticeable shift in its position on the fight to promote Palestinian rights.

The scandal of property and land grabs by illegal settlers has been condemned for so long but this has had no impact. The most recent episode now focuses on Palestinian families being literally thrown out of their own homes in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood. This must stop.

It is a positive step to see the GMB CEC adopt a supportive move to motion 257 and 258 at Congress this year – but let us be clear we need to lead the way with clear solidarity not fudged or half-hearted support. When we liberated South Africa from Apartheid and supported our black South African brothers and sisters it was by calling it out for what it is – Apartheid. Human Rights Watch and other groups now acknowledge that the system being operated and which is oppressing Palestinian's meets the definition of Apartheid.

Conference calls on the Union to organise a new campaign of solidarity to support our Palestinian Brothers and Sisters. We will organise regular vigils of solidarity outside the Israeli embassy. There will be also be rallies and demonstrations outside same said embassy. The GMB will redouble its efforts working with PSC and develop contact with trade union and NGO Palestinian groups so outreach on the campaign can be seen and heard, so the support is felt by this persecuted and oppressed people. This list is not exhaustive.

**CWU Branch
GMB Sisters**

REF Support

4





Motion 3

The Value Of Equalities In GMB Structures

This Regional Equality Conference welcomes the Monaghan report and its recommendations. This conference believes that all the recommendations should be implemented as soon as possible. In this motion we are highlighting in particular Recommendation 27:

Employees and members from other protected groups, including Black and ethnic minority groups, that are underrepresented in the structures of the GMB should be encouraged to participate in its activities, including at officer level, and be supported when they do so. The GMB should provide resources for regular events led by women and members from other underrepresented groups, including Black and ethnic minority groups. The availability of resources for these purposes should be widely advertised.

This conference notes that London Region has consistently led the way on equality by having a full time, dedicated Equality Officer and that this has paid dividends with all strands having self-organised groups and a fully functioning and representative REF. These have now been adopted by the Union nationally and are becoming more integrated into the work of the Union. What we have not yet been able to achieve is that institutional change identified by the Monaghan and Henry reports. In order to achieve this a full time, Regional Equality Officer with appropriate support and training is essential; not only to provide support to strand groups and the REF but to provide specialist support to officers and branches.

This Conference calls for the continuation of the excellent work on Equalities conducted so far by London Region; expanding on existing National policy and leading from the front on equality issues by maintaining the full time, dedicated, Regional Equality Officer role with no reduction in resourcing and an increase in funding for the Regional Equality Officer and the SOG's. This Conference further calls on London Region to support and work with the taskforce in order to help the Union to implement the recommendations of the Monaghan and Henry reports as a matter of urgency.

Rachael Hookway REF
Fevzi Hussein REF

REF Support

Motion 4

Implementing The Dr Elizabeth Henry Report

Dr. Elizabeth Henry was commissioned by the GMB to look into the issue of institutional racism within the GMB and beyond. This report was published almost 18 or so years ago. The report was enacted to bring about transformative change in the GMB on the issue of Race, with numerous recommendations akin to the McPherson report which followed the racially motivated murder of Stephen Lawrence. However Dr Elizabeth Henry's report seems to have been "hidden" and only surfaced after various activist and others fought for it to be produced. The state the report came in spoke volumes. It seems it was placed in storage and only one copy was ever found. This really brings into question as to how serious the issue of race is taken by institutions and structures. Even before the Black Lives Matter uprising in 2020 which were ignited by the murder of George Floyd and cries of the UK is not innocent, the issue of Race was and has been on the agenda. Some of the numerous recommendations in the Dr Elizabeth Henry Report may have been enacted but not all. This conference calls upon the REF to:

1. Ensure that the work of the Task force, set up following the QC Monaghan report 2020, is on track and progress is made in a timely manner.
2. To continue to work with all other self-organised equality strand groups and ensure their voices are heard. And when the Dr. Elizabeth Henry Report is reconsidered as part of the findings of the Monaghan report 2020, that all the recommendations in the Henry report are not only looked at through an intersectional lens, so that no one self-organised group, is left behind, but also ensure that all the recommendations are implemented through a timely plan.
3. To continue to do as it sees fit by way of campaigning, raising awareness, through education, training, or whatever means necessary to ensure Race is always on the agenda.
4. To continue to implement motions, if any, passed at Congress ensuring for all Regions to have full time Equality officers.

**Ealing Branch
GMB Race**

REF Support



Motion 5

Accessible Buildings Charter

Conference will all be aware of the GMB TUC Reasonable Adjustments Disability Passport launched in 2017 by **ability** at the Regional Equality Conference not dissimilar to this. The implementation of the Passport in various workplaces has meant that many disabled employees are now able to work seamlessly and productively.

However **ability** recognises that many of our members will now have Reasonable Workplace Adjustments in place but still find that accessing the buildings they work in and/or visit still remains problematic when it comes to being fully accessible.

We note with concern that the agreed (GMB Congress - 2017 /2018) implementation and development of fully accessible GMB offices and buildings (Locally, Regionally and Nationally) has regrettably been slow and/or has failed to materialize.

All buildings our members work in and/or visit must be made without delay fully accessible to ensure equality and all-inclusivity for disabled employees and members. It is important for the GMB to lead by example that is why **ability** calls on the (London Region) Regional Equality Forum:

Call To Action

1. To work with its disability groups and the wider **GMB Locally, Regionally and Nationally** in developing an **Accessible Buildings Charter** for our members that would work in conjunction with and alongside the already existing GMB TUC Reasonable Adjustments Disability Passport.
2. To actively promote the **Accessible Buildings Charter** to all GMB post-holders to use as a negotiation tool in their bargaining processes.

The essence of this motion is simple with an **Accessible Buildings Charter** in place our members will now be able to fully access the buildings they work in or visit.

ability - the disability forum

REF Support

Motion 6

Equality Online Learning

This Conference congratulates GMB Shout! London for developing an online learning and development programme for members and reps focussing primarily on LGBT+ subjects, in response to recent circumstances surrounding Covid-19.

Conference believes that online learning opportunities provides a vehicle to empower members and reps, and also to develop activists and allies.

Conference therefore encourages equalities officers and activists, through the self-organised groups, to work collaboratively with the training and education department to develop similar online resources to be rolled out across the Region in order to promote equality more widely.

In addition to promoting equality, it is a good opportunity to develop specific skills for existing and new activists, eg public speaking, organising, engaging others via social media etc.

GMB Shout!

REF Support



CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

NATIONAL EQUALITY FORUM

Regional Representative

Brian Shaw - Elected Unopposed

I have represented London Region on the NEF for over ten years now. The next few years after the Monaghan report will be key to changing the way this union operates. I believe that change has to come and know that there are some that oppose that change. If we are to be a union that champions equality then we need to be clear in the region and national what that change is. Vested interest will try to block but failure to change now will be a disaster for this union. I have championed change around equality over the last 10 years and faced opposition, but change has come to every region of the union. If re-elected then I want to work with SOG's and the REF to deliver real change around equality and how it is supported in the GMB.

Nominee For National Race Lead

Taranjit Chana - Elected Unopposed

As a life long anti racist activist and a lay member of the GMB I feel that I can continue the work to ensure Race is on the agenda by challenging, mentoring, raising awareness and being visible and representing at all levels. I have been involved in various campaigns and sat in panels and committees to make sure Race is always visible and present.

As an active lay member I have dedicated my non working time to ensuring that not only is Race always in the Agenda from branch to Regional committee level but also as a national Race lead. My skills knowledge and life experiences provides an intersectional approach to race equality issues from the workplace in setting up black networks, to self organised groups on regional level and nationally in an advisory capacity.



REGIONAL EQUALITY FORUM

GENERAL SEAT

Pool 1 – Central London

Fevzi Hussein GMB CWU Staff (X03) Branch – Elected Unopposed

I have experience in campaign work and have also been GMB Race chair for the last three years. I am an existing member of the REF and work well as a team and also to drive individual responsibilities as and when delegated to me.

Pool 3 – West London

Taranjit Chana Ealing (E10) Branch

As a life long equality campaigner having organised in the community from stopping closure of local community centre, local library , preventing far right marching in the community etc.

Michael Husbands London Security (G43) Branch

I will bring any and all race issues to the front and will not shy away from any controversial issues. I will face them head on and I will always put the members first.

Pool 4 – East London

Pushpa Makwana Newham Apex (N26) Branch – Elected Unopposed

Coming from Bame community AND i am here surely i will be able to work in solidarity and support others and work collectively



Terms of Reference/Standing Orders Guide for Delegates and Visitors

Who attends the GMB London Region Equality Conference?

Each Branch and self-organised group can send up to three delegates to the Regional Equality Conference. All delegates are entitled to vote.

Who Chairs the Conference?

The Chair of Conference is the Chair of the Regional Equality Forum (REF) and in their absence the Vice Chair.

What role does the Regional Equality Forum play at the Conference?

The REF members are not entitled to vote, but can move a Motion and speak to give the REF position on a Motion.

The REF attitude can be one of the following:-

- 1) Support: In such cases this will be advised by the Chair of Conference
- 2) Support with Statement: If necessary, a REF member will explain to Conference reservations or difficulties with part of the Motion. The Motion is then voted on as with statement.
- 3) Remit/Oppose: The REF may seek remission of a Motion before Conference. A member of the REF will explain what the issues are with the Motion. If the Motion is remitted, it means the REF can look at what it feels able to do around the Motion. If the Branch is not willing to remit then the REF will seek opposition to the Motion.
- 4) Oppose: A REF member will speak on the Motion as to why the REF is opposed to the Motion.

How are debates conducted?

The rules of debate, also known as Standing Orders are as follows:

- a) Moving and Seconding a Motion. The mover of a Motion may speak for up to four minutes. The seconder and all subsequent speakers are allowed up to two minutes, although a Motion can be formally seconded. If you wish to do this, just call "formally". Please note: If the mover of a motion is not at the conference, the motion will fall.
- b) Debate and reply to debate. A delegate is not normally allowed to speak more than once in any debate, unless permission is given by the Chair, to make a Point of Order or seek clarification. The mover of the Motion is allowed three minutes to reply, however, this can be waived if there is no opposition to the Motion. No new issues can be introduced in the reply to debate.
- c) Voting. Delegates must remain in their seats during a vote. Voting is by a show of hands and all delegates are entitled to vote. It is the Chair's responsibility to call the result of a vote. However, four tellers are appointed at the start of Conference to count the hands raised in the event of a close vote.
- d) Point of order. Delegates can raise a Point of Order on the conduct or procedure of debates.
- e) Standing Orders. Standing Orders can only be suspended if agreed by at least two thirds of delegates to the Conference who are present and voting.
- f) Chair's ruling. The Chair's ruling is final.



GMB LONDON REGION EQUALITY STRATEGY

Introduction

Equality has become an enshrined key feature of the GMB. We now have increasingly visible, vocal and organised equality groups recruiting, activating and developing members, campaigning and raising the profile of the union in the workplace and the wider community.

We need to ensure that Equalities work is proactively implemented in workplaces/branches via the equality bargaining agenda and be a tool to recruit, retain, empower and activate membership. We also need to reflect the long standing GMB@WORK organising policy to ensure all Equality campaigns and activities support the on-going work of building the Union, empowering members and developing activists.

In a more competitive environment for membership, the profile and approach of the GMB needs to be very clearly focused around organising and recruitment, what brings people into membership and just as importantly, what retains them. This requires the engagement and commitment of everyone in the Region.

Key Areas for 2017-2019:

1. Auditing, mapping and incentivising GMB membership
2. Building branch and workplace equality activity
3. Twinning and supporting branches
4. Training and events
5. Equality bargaining
6. Campaigns

1) Auditing, Mapping and Incentivising

Auditing and mapping our membership is essential, so that we can evaluate if we are reflective of the membership we represent and to identify gaps and weaknesses in our organising and communications strategies. Our membership database has the ability to record equality data but we do not cover all areas. We want to improve and extend this, communicating to reps and members why we need to do this.

Some benefits of this are:

- We know our membership better
- We can target specific groups with messages, courses, events, etc., aimed at them to get involved
- We can target certain campaigns at equality groups
- We demonstrate to employers and members that we are committed to promoting equality.

Action 1: Membership data should be expanded so that it covers, age, disability, race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality and trans status. London Region has developed a page on the membership system to hold this information.

Action 2: The Region's equality data form will be rolled out across the region and used at all training courses and events. Further roll out will be considered and undertaken where relevant.

Action 3: Members should be able to update their equality data online via the website. Incentivising Reps.

The President's National Equality Awards have been in place since 2008 and so would benefit from being reviewed.



The benefits of this could be:

- More targeted around organising, recruitment and embedding equality
- Increased participation in the awards
- The ability to highlight and share best practice.

Action 4: The National Officer for Equality should continue to review the awards so they reflect the new focus and are rewarding those that are genuinely building the union, delivering around equality, recruitment and activism, with a re-launch in 2018.

2) Building Branch/Workplace Equality Activity

This has to be key to mainstreaming equality in the Region and across the union. We need to ensure every branch has an Equality officer and that they are trained in their role. We also need to focus the Branches on what issues are coming up.

Our annual Regional Equality Conference provides the space for every Branch Equality Officer to attend as well as send two additional reps. The Conference focuses on the Region's equality priorities, and delegates select the key issue to take forward to National Equality Conference. Delegate feedback has been consistently very positive and we want to ensure this remains the case.

Action 5: The REF working party is currently reviewing and rewriting the Reps Equality Course and the related Equality Toolkit. Aim to be completed by the end of 2017.

Action 6: The REF working party is currently writing a new course specific to Branch Equality Officers, with a strong emphasis on Equality Impact Assessments and bargaining on issues like equal pay. This should allow us to better focus our Equality campaigns ensuring we always have an Equality claim on the table when negotiating with the many thousands of employers where we have open access to staff. Aim to be completed by the end of 2017

Action 7: The Regional Equality Officer will conduct a Regional audit and development of Branch Equality officers – where required, every branch should be assisted to elect a Branch Equality Officer

Action 8: Once complete, invite all Branch Equality Officers to a one off meeting (or combine with another event) where the internal GMB structures and Branch organising plans are covered off. Also invite the host Branch Secretary for each BEO.

Action 9: The REF will research, pilot and introduce a mentoring scheme where experienced Equality Officers, REF and Self-Organised Groups' (SOGs) members will mentor new BEOs.

Action 10: Every Branch Equality officer should be required to develop an Equality action plan in conjunction with their Branch and Officer, the REF/SOG and Regional Secretary. The plans should also form part of the Branch Organising Plan as this will ensure a much closer working relationship between Branch, Officer and Branch Equality Officer.

Action 11: In future, the Regional Committee and Council along with the Regional Secretary need to be included in taking the Conference's actions forward. Therefore, after each Regional Equality conference, a specific report and organising agenda should be sent to the Regional Secretary for consideration with the Regional Committee.

Action 12: Pro Forma Agenda for Branch Executives – this document will help to ensure that due emphasis is put on issues and that certain issue/events are discussed at the appropriate time. Encourage Branches to ensure Equality reports are provided at each branch meeting by the BEO.



3) Twinning and building Branches.

One of the issues the GMB faces is inactive, or not very active Branches. There may be a high density of the membership that self-identifies with a particular characteristic, or just need outside help to get the branch moving. We need to support them in order to retain and activate membership and for them to become focused on all issues and GMB campaigns, including equality ones.

Better engagement with the Regional Organising Team (ROT) to support/ help direct recruitment, as well with the region's equality structures will energise branches.

Action 13: Pilot a scheme of twinning a SOG with a branch for six months and then rotate onto another SOG. Start January 2018.

Action 14: REF and SOGs to work collaboratively with ROT on specific projects of mutual interest. Identify specific campaigns where membership can be built to strengthen the campaign and grow the Union using, Equal pay audits and Equality Impact assessments as part of any annual claim with employers, always ensuring GMB@Work as the base policy direction.

Action 15: Delegated REF member to participate in ROT meetings and report back to the REF. This could be rotated at the discretion of the REF. Regional Project Board targets of the ROT to be shared with the REF and Regional Equality officer to ensure wider participation of activists.

4) Training and Events

Training is essential so that all reps and staff understand equality issues and how to handle issues that may arise. This needs to be reviewed and updated to reflect legislative change, case law and GMB's growing equality experience and knowledge. Training goes hand in hand with championing our equality successes so that a clear, positive and encouraging message around equality is sent to all members and reps. For maximum impact, this needs to be led by the SMT with the support of the REF and SOGs. We also need to ensure the visibility of the GMB in the workplace and wider community.

Action 16: Set up a working party to review and update current, and to develop new Equality training for reps and staff. Key to this, is new training on how to use equality in bargaining, recruitment and organising.

Action 17: All reps and staff need to have undertaken equality training with regular updates.

Action 18: Clear, regular and membership-wide messages from the Regional Management Team, supported by the REF and SOGs, about our zero tolerance to any form of discrimination against any protected characteristic, and about updates on legislative changes and case law and how reps can use these in workplaces.

Action 19: Look at ways to ensure we continue to improve participation, conference calls, video conferencing, web casts and an online forum.

Key Annual Events:

Regional Equality Conference – Motion based and with workshops/learning outcomes; linked to GMB National Equality Conference. Usually takes place in late October/early November. This is a great source for generating new campaigns.

External Events – like Prides, Mele, community, political events, campaigns – some are annual, and others are as and when but all are opportunities for organising and developing members, getting them involved, and in raising GMB's profile and our equalities agenda.

SOG Reports

15



GMB ability

Over the past 18 months we have been forced to face and overcome individually and collectively the many and varied challenges faced by those who self-define as disabled within and outside of our workplaces as a direct and indirect result of the COVID 19 global pandemic.

Persistence, tenacity and the dogged determination of ability committee members has delivered on many levels concerning disability rights both within GMB and outside of GMB pre COVID 19 and post COVID 19 over the past 18 months:

GMB | TUC Reasonable Adjustments Disability Passport

The idea of a Reasonable Workplace Adjustments Passport began its life as a motion at the 2017 Regional Equality Conference which was then picked up by the TUC and quickly became a joint TUC | GMB project ultimately becoming the " GMB | TUC Reasonable Adjustments Disability Passport and associated Policy Document " and as they say the rest is history.

Since 2017 (launched in 2018) the "GMB | TUC Reasonable Adjustments Disability Passport and associated Policy Document" has been adopted by many local authorities and other employers within London Region. Most recently I have been made aware that the Metropolitan Police Federation and Securitas Security Services have now also adopted the "GMB | TUC Reasonable Adjustments Disability Passport and associated Policy Document" to the benefit of all its disabled employees.

Campaign: GMB ability Demand The Freedom To Travel Anywhere

Our campaign "GMB ability Demand The Freedom To Travel Anywhere" was originally launched in 2019 at a TUC Forum attended by Ms. Heidi Alexander Deputy Mayor for Transport alongside 5 simple asks that we believed would improve the disabled passenger experience across the TfL network. Not satisfied with the response to our 5 asks from Ms. Heidi Alexander **ability** have been pursuing and continue to pursue a meeting with Mr. Sadiq Khan Mayor of London to discuss our campaign and 5 asks and together with his plans for an all-inclusive and fully assessable TFL network as promised when he first took office.

Webinar

In 2020 **ability** held its first ever online event the **ability Webinar** with guest panellists Ms. Vicky Foxcroft MP Shadow Minister for Disabilities and Ms. Bhavini Makwana Engagement Manager at London Vision where we re-launched our campaign "GMB **ability** Demand The Freedom To Travel Anywhere" to ensure the event was fully accessible for all attending **ability** engaged the services of a signer.

In spite of the technical challenges the event was a success being well received by all those in attendance. However when it comes to being fully accessible **ability** always looks for ways that improvements can be made. In this case the online platform did not provide full accessibility therefore all future **ability** online events will use the ZOOM platform which will improve the overall experience for sight impaired attendees.

GMB Congress - 2019

Whilst attending GMB Congress - 2019 **ability** committee members proposed and seconded a motion "accessible buildings" and associated **ability** campaign which was overwhelmingly supported and successfully adopted leading to a positive productive and on-going working relationship with Mr. Allan Wyllie GMB Finance Director and independent consultant Ms. Jan Loveless Access Matters UK to look at ways of improving accessibility and facilities at the GMB Euston Office for disabled members. To highlight the issues faced by disabled members using the GMB Euston Office **ability** devised and



delivered an innovative interactive stall "GMB **ability** accessibility challenge: take the challenge - support the campaign" at the Regional Equality Conference engaging with delegates encouraging them to try out various activities that highlighted the issues faced by disabled members daily in relation to the motion " accessible buildings " using wheelchairs adaptive equipment or dealing with sight loss.

The Monaghan Report

I am confident that by now you will all be aware of and/or have read the Monaghan Report, which was a clear and decisive condemnation of GMB and its historic approach to inclusivity diversity and equality at all levels within the GMB. In response to the Monaghan Report **ability** produced a "statement" fully supporting all the recommendations outlined in the Monaghan Report and asking the GMB to go further and to fully engage with not only **ability** but all the strand groups:

- GMB Race
- GMB Shout
- GMB Sisters
- GMB Young Members

To better improve inclusivity diversity and equality not only for its employees but also for its membership.

As a direct result of the **ability** "statement" members of the **ability** committee held a meeting with Ms. Barbara Plant GMB National President to discuss and put forward questions and ideas for a more positive and productive engagement and visibility "nothing about us without us" of disabled members within GMB Regionally and Nationally and to raise our continued concerns about the lack of meaningful and/or actual inclusivity, diversity and equality at all levels within the GMB and to better understand how the "Equality Task Force" will be considering these issues for members with hidden and physical disabilities now and in the future.

It was an interesting informative and productive meeting where it was clear that Ms. Barbara Plant GMB National President understood the issues raised and fully supported the aims of **ability** to better improve inclusivity, diversity and equality within GMB not only for its disabled members but for the whole of its membership.

GMB and TUC Committees

Since 2019 **ability** committee members have represented both the interests of **ability** and GMB and continue to do so regionally and nationally with great success and now hold general and disability seats on numerous GMB and TUC committees:

- GMB National Disabled Network
- APPG - All Party Parliamentary Group
- TUC LESE (disabled seat) Regional Council
- TUC LESE Disabled Members Network
- TUC LESE Executive Committee

Continuing to build and develop positive working relationships with other trade unions and other like-minded disabled and able-bodied individuals within those trade unions across the TUC network all with one aim that being to fight for disability rights both within and outside of the workplace.

Most recently **ability** committee members have been invited and have accepted the invitation to attend on behalf of GMB and the TUC an (APPG - All Political Party Group) on disability to discuss the Inclusive Transport Strategy and to discuss getting "out and about" the latest strategy focusing on issues surrounding transport streets and the wider environment.



2021 - The New Normal

I am and remain confident ability will be able to continue to build on the successes it has had over the past 18 with the continued development of the "ability Workplace Organisers Disabilities Toolkit" which will enable both GMB Representatives and Officers to better support members in the workplace with hidden and physical disabilities alongside the use of the "GMB | TUC Reasonable Adjustments Disability Passport and associated Policy Document" and hope you will all agree it is clear that ability continues to make its mark within GMB and across the TUC and will with continue to do so with renewed persistence, tenacity perseverance and dogged determination for many more years to come.

Making it abundantly clear to all those who question or doubt those with disabilities within and outside of the workplace that when you look past a persons hidden or physical disability and look at their ability to get the job done - they will deliver.

Gordon Brunning
Chair ability - the disability forum 2021

GMB Race

Reflecting on another tough but rewarding year for our activists. The challenges of Covid19 would not have been lost on many of us and many have suffered personal loss.

I am grateful to work alongside so many committed trade unionists who are willing to give up their time to further the agenda for black workers. This year will be no different and I am delighted that the Chair's role will be picked up by Abdi who has shown his credentials over the last cover of years for sure. I will still be about to help the committee and I would ask everyone who wants to see change for good to come and be active with GMB Race.

GMB Race members were active in engaging authorities to complain about racist and homophobic behaviours and we can confirm that one such complaint has led to a conviction. It is important that we report these crimes. We know of another hate crime allegation which police responded too slow allowing the CCTV memory to be swiped clean!

It genuinely has been an honour serving as the Chair of this wonderful committee. The inspiration that we feel off each other is clear to see.

I hope you all have an enjoyable day at our Conference and look forward to meeting and speaking with you all.

Fevzi Hussein
Chair, GMB Race

GMB Sisters

It has been a pleasure to step in as Chair of GMB Sisters for the past six months. I would like to pay tribute to all the work Lesley Stansfield did as Chair prior to standing down to focus on all branch and Labour Party duties, and to all the outgoing Sisters Committee who are always a pleasure to work with.

We were elected as a Committee in November 2018 and initially focused on rolling out the successful M2M (Menstruation to Menopause) campaign to branches to support them implementing the model policy in workplaces. Early 2019 saw us planning and delivering another successful women's conference and later in 2019 we started to plan engagement with members around a flexible working policy and campaign.

In early 2020 we were planning our annual women's conference in May, a social film night showing Hidden Figures, had a number of meetings planned with branches about the M2M campaign, and



were about to launch a members' survey on flexible working when the pandemic caused all our plans to be upset. All physical events had to be cancelled and after careful consideration we paused the flexible working engagement as the requirement for so many to work from home meant that results would be affected by the exceptional circumstances.

Throughout the pandemic the Sisters committee had continued to meet virtually, discussing how the changing situation has affected women at work and planning appropriate campaigns. Early in the pandemic we surveyed members to find out what urgent issues they were facing and put on a webinar to respond to safety and legal issues facing our members. We then picked up a previous plan for an awareness campaign about pregnancy and maternity rights and have designed a poster and are developing tools for activists.

As we hopefully come out of the pandemic there is much to do for those Sisters who are re-standing and those who are new to the Committee and we wish them all the best.

Elly Baker
Chair, GMB Sisters

GMB Shout!

Shout moved online with the start of the pandemic, whilst we did not anticipate the length that this would continue we have found it easier to involve people around the region. In 2020 we went ahead with our AGM and elected a new committee, we also developed policy and a motion to TUC LGBT+ conference around Covid 19. As usual we held our fringe meeting the night before the start of the main TUC LGBT conference, all be it a webinar. We had the Lesbian and Gay Foundation as the main speakers around their survey over Covid 19. On the 3rd March we were part of the maximising black activists in the union.

We have as well run an online quiz during on IDAHOBIT (international Day against Homophobia, biphobia, inter sexism and transphobia)

A team has been developing training that can be run in branches for members and activist, these include how to be an LGBT+ Ally and how to develop a bargaining agenda for LGBT members. We are in the process of finalising a communication strategy aimed at how we interact with branches and members.

In person Prides have all been cancelled over the last 12 months, however we have participated in some online prides. London Pride is scheduled for September 11th this year and we have applied to be on the parade. Subject to this happening and us being successful to be on the parade then we will be letting branches and activist know our plans

Brian Shaw
Chair, GMB Shout!



Regional Equality Officers Report to Congress 2021

Covering 1st May 2019 – 30th April 2021

In 2019 GMB London Region continued to send delegates to the National Equality Conferences and Summits, insuring a gender balance and representing each of our equality strands.

We celebrated 10 years of Regional Equality Conferences in London Region, with presentations /workshops from all our self-organised groups (SOGs), highlighting very inspirational past REF & SOG members. It was a huge pleasure to award our 2nd Regional Equality award to Rachael Hookway for all her hard work and unstinting dedication and commitment on our REF/Sisters/Young London Committees and representing us at National level. The conference was followed by the General Secretary Hustings in the afternoon.

2020 saw many changes to the National Equality Conference, changing the dates, introducing a Stand-alone Young Members Organising School. We attended an interim one day motions only National Conference and a National Women's Conference, which sadly started and abruptly stopped due to terrible storms. Unfortunately due to the lockdown, plans for the new format of Conferences and Summits were halted and any Regional Conferences/Planned events were halted also.

Whilst we had already started using Teams to communicate, Lockdown was a shock and we needed to speed up the use of Teams for everyone and get all our members to learn to participate in video conferencing to have meetings online. This was challenging, overcoming the difficulties of accessibility, particularly for our members with specific accessibility needs, but our activists rose to the challenge and worked hard to get it done. We have to thank Rachael Hookway in particular for all her patience and hard work to help members to navigate the systems.

During lockdown, the REF were working on new training for Branch Equality Officers, using both online and face to face sessions, incorporating mentoring from leading activists on the REF and SOGs. We are looking forward to completing and delivering this rather large piece of work.

2021 We will be holding our first ever online Regional Equality Conference at the end of June. Plans are currently underway for the National online Conferences and Summits for 2021 and our REF and four out of five SOGs will all elect new committees this summer.

GMB Shout!

Having made significant gains at London Pride in 2018, saw once again the Trade Union section moved back in the parade line up in 2019. However, we made the most of it and had a fantastic turnout, we were able to get shout outs for GMB by the MCs on the way around and activists handed out materials to "Join GMB".

Brian Shaw has once again been elected as Co-Chair to the National Equality Forum.

GMB Shout! were having a bit of a transitional year, having said goodbye to their wonderful Secretary Carl Banks due to work commitments and personal issues and commitments for other officers, they have kept the flag flying as well as they can and continue to work hard to raise the profile of GMB for LGBT+ workers. Held their second Regional Summit, they have opened up their meetings to all Regional LGBT+ members to increase participation and welcome new members to take up committee positions, this is a work in progress and hopefully the next summit will see an increase in member participation.



GMB Sisters

Having elected a new committee in August 2019, Sisters continued to make headway with the M2M roadshow and started planning for their new campaign "Flexible Working – Fact or Fiction" to launch during Women's History Month in March 2020 whilst holding a film night social, along with planning for the Regional Women's Conference, in May 2020. Ran their women only public speaking course at the start of the year.

The Regional Women's conference received another fantastic response having 107 first time applicants and for the first time we saw a higher percentage of Black, Asian and Minoritised Ethnic women than White British/White Other women apply. Sadly the pandemic took over and we were unable to have any of the events, it was felt that even the campaign would not have been appropriate during a time of such difficulty for everyone. Although materials have been prepared to start the campaign when the time is right.

GMB Sisters did feel it was important to contact women to offer help and support and so developed a regional survey around the difficulties of lockdown, how it affected members both at work and at home and highlighting support for members dealing with Domestic Abuse. Followed by a first ever all woman panel to advise on work issues, legal and Health & Safety, although all regional members were eventually surveyed and invited to attend.

Sisters will be running a workshop on Maternity, Paternity and shared Parental Leave, produced a poster for workplaces and materials to help reps to support members in May 2021 following a motion from our Regional Equality Conference.

GMB Young London

Held their first ever Regional Summit in October. They had a good response. Our Young London Committee wrote and delivered all their own workshops, which were really engaging and interesting encouraging members to get more involved and organise within their workplaces and understand the value of collective bargaining to make change happen and improve their working conditions.

Young London planned to run their own organising school as a follow up. However, the election was announced, so sadly they had to cancel, but intend to go ahead at a later date.

It has truly been a difficult time to organise for Young Members, the nature of the group is that people age out and the committee was already very low in numbers when lockdown happened, they had lots of plans in place to rebuild, but again the lockdown really took its toll. They are now looking at running some online training events hoping this may attract more members, so hopefully in the next few months they will have some success with a new committee elected.

GMB Race

During 2019 continued their anti-racism work, speaking at many national and regional demonstrations, held successful fringe events at the last GMB Congress and Show Racism the Red Card. Highlighted the plight of the Windrush generation during a well-attended AGM in July 19, guest speakers included our very own Evelyn Martin, NUS President Shakira Martin and Dolly Okeowo, winner of the first Mary Turner award from Barking. Taranjit Chana was elected to the Race Seat on the National Equality Forum.

Held their first very successful Summit in October, with excellent feedback from attendees, giving high marks for all the varied and engaging workshops written and delivered by the committee. There was a panel of speakers including the charismatic Florence Eshalomi, elected in 2019 as MP for Vauxhall, giving us the opportunity to engage more members who have never attended events or been active previously. Robbie Scott was elected to the CEC in a Race Seat.



In 2020 produced an excellent newsletter, responding to the Black Lives Matter demonstrations and the failure of the government to take action on the report of the disproportionate effect of Covid on BAME Workers. Robbie Scott has been involved with the National working party to produce a BAME Workers COVID-19 Toolkit, called for by the BAME CEC members. Taranjit Chana as National Race Rep is heading up the National Network meetings attended by the Chair – Fevzi Hussein and Vice Chair Naome Kyokushaba-Katsigazi.

2021 Taranjit & Robbie were amongst the panel for the first National Race Zoom meeting, chaired by Taranjit. Fevzi Hussein has launched a podcast called BANDOLFA and supported our Ability group to run their first webinar.

GMB Ability

2019 GMB Ability have been working on their campaign “Freedom To Travel Anywhere”. They have put together 5 asks for the London Mayor and attended a TUC forum with Heidi Alexander, Deputy Mayor for Transport to put their demands to her, not satisfied with the response, they have been pursuing a meeting with the Mayor himself, which has obviously been impacted by the lockdown. Ability delivered a brilliant interactive stall during the breaks at the Regional Conference engaging delegates to try out various activities that member face, using wheelchairs, or sight loss. It was the highlight of the conference.

We have been made aware that the Met Police Federation have taken forward the Reasonable Adjustments Passport Policy for themselves, along with many local authorities and other employers within London Region.

It has been challenging to get the Ability committee on Teams, but we did manage to get most people signed up and attending meetings, I am so pleased with all the perseverance committee members showed.

The committee is working on a toolkit for reps for supporting members with disabilities, in the last couple of months, we have managed to move this along significantly.

Ability launched their campaign “GMB Ability demand freedom to travel anywhere” at their first ever event which was also online at their Webinar September 2020. Chaired by Ability member Sue Kelly, Panel members Gordon Brunning & Dean Apps from the Ability Committee with guest panellists Vicky Foxcroft MP Shadow Minister for Disabilities and Bhavini Makwana Engagement Manager at London Vision and engaged a signer for the event. Despite the challenges, it was successful. However, we have ruled out the webinar platform as it was not working for our sight impaired members, but with the introduction of Zoom, we believe we will do better in the future.

Dean Apps is representing GMB on the TUC Disability Committee and along with the Chair Gordon Brunning attend the National Network meetings.

We were successful in winning the motion to Congress on accessible buildings and our disability group have recently been working with Allan Wyllie to look at improvements to accessibility at the Euston Office.

A contingent of Ability members met with our National President Barbara Plant to understand how the Equality Task Force will be considering the issues for members with disabilities and put forward questions and ideas for a more fruitful engagement and visibility with the Union on disability issues, “nothing about us, without us”.

Sue Hackett
GMB London Regional Equality Officer