



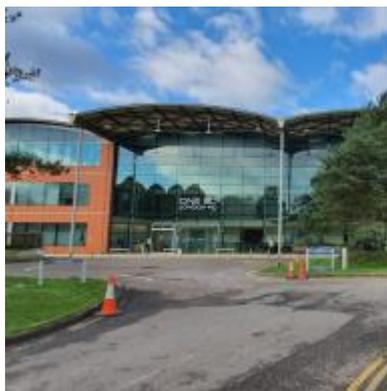
# *South East Central* 2019 Annual Report



**In Confidence for South East Central CWU members**

## Contents

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Page</u>
Secretary's Report	Chris Power	3
Young Workers Report	Liam Reed	5
Assistant Secretary Report	Steve Taylor	6
Political Report	Dianne Hill	8
Women's Report	Una McMahon	10
Chair's Report	Dave Kauffman	12
Safety Report	Rick Cobern	14
Assistant Secretary Report	Pete Francis	15
Assist Secretary Report (& Safety)	Richard Cain	16
Feature - Lewes	Steve Taylor	17
BAME Report	Animesh Kana	18
Obituary		18
Retired Members Report	David Lomakin	19
Equality Report	Steve Rhodes	20
Meeting Dates		21
Existing Contacts - subject to AGM		23
AGM Invite		24



### Picture on front cover

Sevenoaks Workstyle building,  
the scene of where the first  
compulsory redundancies  
within BT may be had.

*The views expressed in this annual report are personal to the author concerned and may not be the view of the branch. This report is "in confidence" and is meant for CWU South East Central members only.*

## Branch Secretary - Chris Power



By far the largest issue to impact this Branch in all the years I have been a full time officer (since 1995), has been the announcement by BT Enterprise, on October 16<sup>th</sup> 2019, at the BT Sevenoaks Workstyle building, of 367 national Compulsory Redundancies (CR) of which 58 were directly attributable to our Branch members in Sevenoaks, and several homeworkers across the Branch.

This is the first time any part of BT, or any BT subsidiary company has gone down the road of redundancies that are of a Compulsory nature. Up until now the approximately 100,000 redundancies that have taken place since the 1990's has been on a voluntary basis, and any employee surpluses have been dealt with by redeployment, involving retraining where required.

The Union nationally is resisting this move to compulsory's, but the situation continues to such an extent that at the writing of this report we are very close to the company issuing CR notices, with only months of employment left for some.

As a Trade Union officer of long standing, I have always been a believer of negotiation, but it seems that is failing in this scenario. Now it may well be time for us to stand up and be counted, not only against BT Enterprise, but it should be realised, that BT Fleet (now Rives Solutions) has also announced CR's and also closure of some of its sites.

It seems that Industrial Relations can't adequately resolve this situation, and the Union leadership and all of us as members has to consider seriously the next step to defend our members, because, who will the CR axe fall on next. Which part

of BT is safe? My thoughts are that no employees are safe, and at some stage we will have to do something to protect ourselves from this attack.

### Organisation

Back in 2016, this Branch started the "BUMP" recruitment initiative. At that time, we had around 868 BT workers in the Branch, and a total membership of just on 1000 members (excluding Retired of 100). Since that time, BUMP (reps going out into Offices and the Field bumping into members and non-members alike) has meant that the Branch now stands at around 1,160 BT workers, a net increase of 300 new members to the Branch, although the figure was closer to 500 plus, as during that time around 200 have left employment.

It has been such a successful Branch recruitment cam-



Withdean - Diary Distribution in November

paign, that Branches from all around the country have copied the method, which involves two reps going to various BT locations at 7.15 AM in the morning, and speaking to everyone that we meet, also distributing Branch goodies imprinted with Branch details.

We have also been recognised at national level, and won awards, for the way we conduct our recruitment. The recruitment main emphasis takes place at the latter 4 months of the year, and we look forward to seeing as many of you as we can at the end of 2020.

## Generally

As a Branch we ran three members meetings in 2019, one was the AGM and other two were Openreach PTT meetings which were not well attended I am afraid. However, we feel important that even in this day and age of Social Media, which seems to stop members attending face to face meetings, we are still going to pursue that contact to update members during 2020. So please watch for emails and notices on Noticeboards, and attend the meetings when advertised.

We have eleven officers comprising of four senior full time officers in the Branch, supported by seven other Officers, and most

positions are taken which is great, however, we are always looking for new younger reps to join, as some of the Officers depart for pastures new and seek to be involved in other things. The pressures on Union Officers should not be unrecognised, as it takes real character to put yourself into this type of leadership role and all that goes with it. For those that are seeking pastures new I wish you well, and for all the other Officers, I will give you my complete support.

Finally, it is important to thank all Officers who worked hard during 2019, and look forward to their support during 2020 and beyond.

If you would like to get involved as a Union Activist, or even as a supporting Officer, please attend the Annual General Meeting as advertised in Brighton, on 19<sup>th</sup> February where elections are taking place, and put yourself forward.

I look forward to seeing you there, where you can question me on any event that has taken place in 2019, and how we move for-



ward, as I have kept this report relatively brief.

Thank you for being a member of the South East Central Branch of the C.W.U.

United we stand!



# Young Worker Rep - Liam Reed



Colleagues and Friends, I'd firstly like to thank you all for the continuous support over the 5 years that I have been representing you.

It is with a heavy heart that I have made the decision to stand down as the South East Central's Young Worker's Officer, and look forward to handing the post over to the next successful election candidate, in this year's Annual General Meeting.

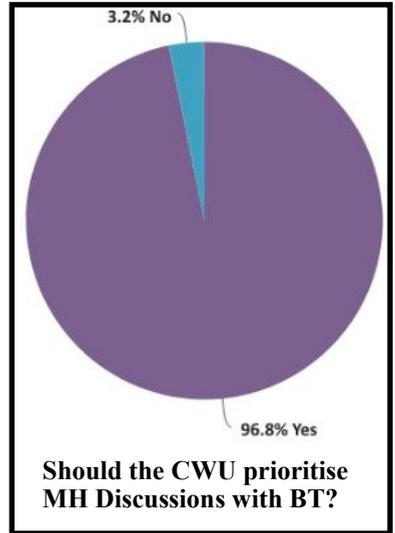
In 2019, we faced many challenges both within the branch and across the country, from the threat of compulsory redundancy with BT Enterprise employees, to tackling the rising rent and housing prices for the South East.

Despite these challenges, we've made great advances to how the union and company approach Mental

Health for members, earlier on in the year I was elected as the Regional Organising Committee Chairman. As a committee, we agreed to focus on raising the awareness of Mental Health within the south east.

As a result of running this campaign I've compiled extensive data in which we can use to help better understand your needs when dealing with mental health.

At the General Conference in April 2019, the motion from the young workers conference that was carried unanimously and also carried unanimously for our union to become affiliated with Renter Unions nationally, to advise those in rent traps and help the homeless to find accommodation.



Full details of survey can be found at [cwusec.org.uk/MentalHealth.htm](http://cwusec.org.uk/MentalHealth.htm)

I also took part in a Regional Young Workers event, where we handed out gift bags, which were filled with essential items, to the homeless.



# Assistant Secretary - Steve Taylor



The year has been eventful, but then again which year hasn't? Last year I said how things have changed over the years, from the family orientated business BT (after GPO) was, to how it has degraded to its current state, in the name of profit. As many people will mention in this report, the move by BT Enterprise to announce Compulsory Redundancies is yet another step towards a Victorian attitude, to employment.

How long will it be before we all have to start working

Saturdays again? Hang on.... the writing was on the walls wasn't it? Snuck that in, little by little eroding away our Terms and Conditions. Slowly, slowly catchy monkey, must have been the executive mantra.

When Pete Francis was successfully elected to the TFSE, I picked up his regional role of BT Enterprise. I didn't have much time in the role when, whilst I was on holiday abroad, the Compulsory Redundancies were announced. All I could do was follow what Chris and Peter was reporting about what was happening to our members in Sevenoaks. A black armband day for BT.

Was the writing on the wall? With hindsight, perhaps it was. With headlines like "BT to close 90% of its offices but insist there won't be job losses", Metro 05/06/19. Some of our members jobs aren't going,

however they are being cast far and wide and not close enough for our members to move with them. To add insult to injury the company are even employing people to do this work, at a lower grade.

Perhaps it's a time we gave that monkey a poke in the eye!

Part of my roles for the last year was one of the safety officers. I went to a meeting in London where senior HR people confirmed, with great pleasure, that the TUPE of BTFS would save the company money, and not only that, we would get a much better service from the new owners! Well that worked out well didn't it!

One of my lead roles for the branch is disciplines. Whether these be minor misdemeanours to gross misconduct or first-time attendance hearings to decision meetings, our members need that support. But what I can say is that Openreach's previous obsession with Performance Management has gone quiet and the replacement, "Behaviours", has also gone quiet, was this because of the change to Patch Managers?

I must put a reminder to all members, if you get into a formal situation and you are

"I love working Saturday",  
said no one ever.



allowed to have a union representative with you, contact us do it as soon as possible. You might think your manager has your best interests at heart, if that was the case, he would love to see us wouldn't he/she? You might not have gone through a situation like this before, we have, hundreds of them!

As a union rep, I was invited to go and look at Openreach's OpenStreet training facility in Peterborough. With the talk of possibly turning Crawley TEC into another version of this, we would welcome a facility, much closer to home, for our engineers the learn, although the move is still very much in its infancy.

As the only active ULR on the branch it was good to see Richard Cain double the size of the ULR group. Perhaps he can help invigorate some of our members learning.

The Photo Competition was run again in 2019, with the winner being Shaun Bayfords wing-walking photograph captured at Eastbourne Air show (see right). Full details of results can be found on our website.

It is hoped the AGM will agree to allow another photo competition for 2020. Look out for any Education Newsletters for details.



**OpenStreet - Peterborough**

The branch website is another role I have and I have looked after it since its conception. It currently is in its second incarnation and probably well overdue for a third.

Richard Cain has been tasked to take on the learning and eventual running of the website which should free me up to do other tasks.

This job has been made a little harder by the fact that the software we use (Microsoft Expression Web 4) to create and maintain the website, is no longer supported by Microsoft. Which can cause issues when connecting to the web servers and we had to find a work-around. So new software will be needed in the long term.



# Political Officer - Dianne Hill



Well what a year and where does it leave us?

I started the year marching in London for a people’s vote, I firmly believe that once we knew the terms of Brexit it should have been put back to the people. This is what Trade unions do, put the deal back to the members who are affected by it, but heh we’re leaving, so we have to hope we get a good deal for the future of our children.

I opposed the budget on Tunbridge Wells Borough Council saying, it’s not the time to be spending £90m + on a new theatre, car park and Council offices, whilst we have nearly 1,000 **families** on the housing waiting list, huge rise in food banks, cuts to homeless, children’s centres, etc. Of course, they waffled on again about 2008 and it’s all Labour’s

fault that caused this. Nothing to do with them and Tory policies, told them to watch the film, “The Big Short”, showing how the financial crisis of 2007-2008 was triggered by the United States housing bubble.

Local elections in May saw Tunbridge Wells double their Councillors (4) Labour are now in control of Southborough Town Council where I was elected Deputy Mayor. Across the Region Labour gained 73 seats and took control of Gravesham and held on to other councils, Brighton by 1 seat. We kept our MEP John Howarth but the results were a disaster for Labour (Labour’s position on

Europe was?) As a Labour Regional Board member representing the CWU, I oversaw and chaired some of the S.E Parliamentary selections for the N.E.C.

I help out at our local food bank “Nourish” which is an independent one. During the Christmas week in Tunbridge Wells we gave parcels to 229 families, up 36%. These people are all referred and most are in low paid work. All over the country this is happening, a constant reminder of this Governments policies. Very Involved in many local Litter picks, attended a climate emergency conference. I joined the Extinct Rebellion march in Tunbridge Wells, Priti Patel (Home Secre-





tary) has added Extinction Rebellion beliefs to the Government's terror watchdog. Sir Keir Starmer said, "It's completely wrong and counterproductive to describe Extinction Rebellion as an 'extreme ideology, I have spent a lifetime defending the right to protest – and campaigning for action on the climate crisis is hugely important." Scary I could be labelled a terrorist! Priti Patel, pro Brexit MP, made a speech to the Institute of Directors in 2016, in which she argued to cut social and workers employment rights. More scary!

The Labour group moved a composite motion on Climate emergency with Tunbridge Wells now having a policy, to work towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030. Many Councils have done this but many have gone for later dates Kent County Council it is 2050! Frightening what we have done to our planet, who would have thought plastic

could do so much damage to the environment.

I marched in Tunbridge Wells Pride behind the Labour women's banner, attended the Labour Party Conference in Brighton where Interference by UNITE, the Union within Labour, is doing Trade unions no good - it was very blatant at Conference. Some excellent fringe meetings, Hove and Portslade hosted an excellent event on domestic violence, chaired by Peter Kyle, which was really interesting and informative. Another from the Local Government Association (Councillors) was very clear stop the infighting and stop trying to dictate to Councillors. Some good debates, lots of really good commitments.

Housing is a big issue; it seems as though Councils want to and are building on green field sites. I know we need housing but much of what is being built is not what's needed, we need social/council housing, not million pounds detached properties. History reminds us of the Enclosure Acts which gave the rights to common land and open fields to be enclosed, and created legal property rights to land previously held as common land. Between 1604 and 1914 over 5,200 individual enclosure acts were passed affecting 6.8 million acres. A 17<sup>th</sup> Centu-

ry verse says it all:

*"The Law locks up the man or woman, who steal the goose from off the common, but leaves the greatest felon loose, who steals the common from the goose."*

Strange election just before Christmas and dark evenings, the exit poll said it all. Terrible result but we know what we were being told on the doorstep, they couldn't vote for Corbyn or his wishy washy Brexit policy!

We kept all our 8 seats in the South East which was a relief but losing some of those Northern seats was a disaster. So where now? well we are leaving Europe not sure what that means but Boris will "Get Brexit Done". We have Ian Duncan Smith awarded a knighthood probably for his work with the people on benefits. Universal credit, bedroom tax, benefit cap, as a Councillor I see and try and help these vulnerable people whose lives he has destroyed. Let's hope the next Labour Leader is electable because Labour had some really good policies, too many...but!!

220 women MP's now, that's 34%. 104 Labour women MPs, first time Labour, or Tories, have had more female MP's than men. *Just saying!*

# Women's Officer - Una McMahon



Welcome to a new decade, 2020.

Another year bounces by, with its highs and lows and in-betweens. We won the cricket world cup after drama with a super over. We did the Brexit shuffle (in, out, shake it all about) and I was very proud to have represented the Women of the South East Central Branch (WSEC).

The WSEC attendance increased in 2019, with great support at the menopause event in the Summer. This WSEC lunchtime chat was well attended, and support for each other was there in abundance. We all discussed the different approaches regarding the subject of menopause, from different parts of the business. It was noted that there are different managerial approaches when dealing with symp-

oms of menopause that may impact daily work tasks.

I have successfully arranged 3 Women specific days, held in the field. On these days I distributed WSEC merchandise (pens, lanyards, notebooks etc.) and connected with our WSEC field staff. This was a great experience to meet up with Women members while in their own working environment. It gave me the opportunity to introduce myself and leave my card, for reference, if needed in the future.

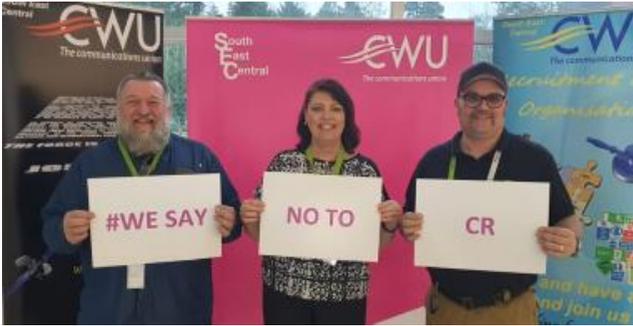
I have been out and about in the branch on our many recruitment drive days, linking in with many of our members, it has been great

to meet each and every one of you.

It is so important for me as a representative to talk to YOU, the members, to get a feel for how things are going. To communicate current trends, changes and feelings regularly for our members is of upmost importance to us. The sooner we are made aware of any relevant issues affecting our members, the sooner we can investigate and gain information relating to them. This will put us in a better position to represent you.

Visiting Yarnfield, the BT training facility in Stone has been rewarding this year, as on all of my visits we have had 95%, or more, of the





trainees signing to join OUR union. In today's uncertain times, trade unions have more importance than ever before. It is great that these trainees feel this way and by signing to become a member of the CWU are protected as soon as they are officially working.

Sadly, in October, BT seniors made the announcement that BT Enterprise will be exiting Sevenoaks workstyle building, and the first talk of compulsory redundancy was officially communicated. This affects many of our branches members who work for BT Enterprise and this has

stretched our resource, as CWU officers. Each member in scope, who has asked for representation at their official redundancy meeting has had representation from this branch. We as officers, have gone above and beyond, in supporting our members, and happily done so. We collectively hope in

the coming months there is an amicable solution found for all concerned.

As always, any feedback or ideas for the future regarding WSEC (Women of the South East Central) is always welcome.

Here is hoping for more WSEC events and WSEC forums, "for women who get involved!"

We will be organising a women's event around "period poverty" in March, to celebrate the "International Woman's Day". Be sure to look out for it!



Ask about becoming a committee member or a workplace rep



# Chairs Report - Dave Kauffman



As the Chairperson of the CWU South East Central Branch, would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have participated with and supported the Branch during the year of 2019.

I would like to thank the Branch Secretary for the hard work that he puts in driving the branch forward. Anyone who has worked within any organisation will know these things do not just happen on their own.

As for my role within the Branch, I have had the lead role on most things "Openreach". Within the industrial remit of the branch I have attended many meetings and branch forums on Openreach issues, throughout the year. Like the other officers of the branch, I do this work in conjunction with representing our members at Griev-

ances, Disciplines and Performance meetings, that they may find themselves involved in.

2019, has seen Openreach looking to change its structure. In Service Delivery, we have seen one of the biggest shakeups for many years, with Patch Managers and Patch Leads being created as new roles. I say "new roles" and yes, they are "new roles", as a Patch manager can now have upward of 45 engineers under them. The new Patch Lead role allows team members a "Path of Progression" (promotion) and enables the Patch manager to manage a large team, which is double the old team size.

I am not sure how successful this will be if senior managers will persist in putting the Patch leads on

the work queues for extended periods, something that was not in the Patch Lead job description. Unfortunately, the pessimist in me remembers how the old coach role was initially advertised and worked in reality. In my opinion, prior to 2009, when the local managers had two team coaches, the Service Delivery Patches were running at their most efficient and the Network was becoming at its most resilient (this may also have been because of FPQ). If Openreach are given the opportunity to build a resilient network, rather than chase the "smoke and shadows" they call Performance, then hopefully we will see the building of the new Fibre Network, that will become the norm in the next 5 to 10 years.





Openreach originally attempted to reorganise FnD in 2018, but their model was put on hold, for first line managers and team members. In October 2019, as the year came to an end, FnD announced that they were now ready to push forward with their reorganisation of their team member model.

The issue was that they were challenged by OFCOM to meet MSL targets. FnD were struggling to balance between the old Business connections (Ethernet) and Infrastructure development (Build) models. Although FnD have issued a new projected model of how they see the future structure, I still have to wonder if they know exactly what they want.

With regards the other main issues within Openreach.

I think one of the main challenges is the way, the underhand way, that Openreach are going out of there way to undermine the grades of roles that are within Openreach. In 2014, the new people employed into Openreach were to be employed on the new 2020

contract terms, with the main one being TMNE2. What I need everyone to understand is that the other grades are:- TMNE9 grade (for the senior engineer) and the TMNE3 grade. The



***TMNE3 role is not a re-placement for C3***, however, Openreach are spreading the falsehood that it is!

The other thing is, regarding the TMNE grades, is the 10% on target Bonus. Members must be aware that the CWU are campaigning to incorporate the target Bonus into normal pay. I suggest when asked you all support the CWU campaign.

You should all be aware of the Personal Travel Time campaign (PTT) which the CWU are still pushing to get this changed. It is not morally right that team members have to trav-

el in their own time, at no reward, to be on site at first job by their start time. But the bigger issue and impact, may well be at the end of day. During the day, the engineer may have been moved over an hours travel away from their home and also be expected to do up to a further hour flex on top of this, increasing the end of day by up to two hours, therefore disrupting their work-life balance.

So please do not think we don't need you to support South East Central Branch, because we do, and I thank you all for your support up to now.

#### SEC Outlaws - Our Hours



<https://youtu.be/WANHLQoTOd4>

## Safety Officer - Rick Cobern



(housekeeping) our work has become even more challenging, with lack of housekeeping staff in ISS, proactive work and routines have been replaced by the less desirable reactive work. This has led to an appalling deterioration of our welfare facilities right across the region, bins are overflowing, heating and hot water has been switched off, blocked and overflowing toilets now an all too common place and this is just the tip of the iceberg.

Over the past year the Branch safety team have been working on streamlining the management of safety issues in the branch area. We have better engaged with the region as a whole and have been able to resolve many more issues than was previously possible. This success was largely due to our long-term data access plan, which began a little under three years ago and as a result, we now have the ability to access safety information wherever we may be.

Building fabric maintenance has not escaped, with CBRE staff having to raise slow purchase orders, frequently failing to get the work done within target times, if indeed at all.

Sadly, since the outsourcing of BTFS to CBRE (building maintenance) and ISS



But let's not put the blame on those on the ground, who are struggling to get the work done. The blame lies squarely in the lap of those who decided to outsource the work in the first place.

With our USR's conducting building inspections on a 90 day cycle we would ask anyone who observes full bins, lack of toilet paper, or any other deterioration in the facilities or building fabric, to report it to 0800 22 33 88

When you get the Job number, forward it to your man-



ager by email, this will give them and us the evidence we need to get something done about it. Together we will apply pressure to get the issues resolved.

As some of you know Pete Francis was elected to the T&FS executive and I have recently stepped up to fill the role of Branch Safety Coordinator. I will continue to push for better facilities and maintenance throughout the patch.

Should you have any safety related issues or concerns then feel free to drop me an email here [safe-ty@cwusec.org.uk](mailto:safety@cwusec.org.uk)



# Assistant Secretary - Peter Francis



It really had been an amazing year for me and firstly can I thank everyone who has helped me as always throughout the year. Secondly can I thank all of you that voted for me in the National Elections and helped me gain a role on the TFSE (Telecom and Financial Services Executive). It is an honour to represent our branch at National level and will always try to do my best by you all.

Since my election was confirmed in July, my roles in the branch changed with Rick Coburn taking up my role as the Safety coordinator, Steve Taylor my role as Enterprise SPOC and all the officers sharing my other responsibilities. I have also been given roles on two national teams, Enterprise and Supply Chain. I have also been coerced onto the Strategy team as well as the Workplace rep project.

I am seeing things now from a different perspective and feel very sad for the members in Enterprise who are affected with possible compulsory redundancy. I am doing all I can to avert any unnecessary redundancies along with the National Team. I am sure it will be a turbulent and rocky road but we will not rest until everyone is sorted.

My Role in Supply Chain is chair of the committee and gives me the opportunity to work closely with our Branch Secretary, Chris Power, who also sits on this team. This has thrown up a whole load of challenges which is great, but having such a close ally working with me and helping me settle in and sharing his knowledge.

The strategy team deal with all urgent issues that affect the CWU as well as pay and T's & C's. By the time you read this report, we will be in the process of negotiating pay deals for all our members.

Workplace rep is about increasing our organisation and how we recruit and maintain a

good rep structure. Maybe reading this someone might feel they would like to start getting involved. It can be as much or little as you want but without you there is no union. Give it a thought?

I must say I am thoroughly enjoying my new role, it involves many long days, trips away from home but gives me a lot of satisfaction knowing I am trying to help all our members, not just in the Branch.

It has and is an honour to be part of the South East Central Branch team and I will remain as Assistant Secretary. So I am not leaving or going away, it will just mean some of your issues may be escalated to me via the Branch. I am always here to help and will be about as much as possible. I will still be seen regularly in Sevenoaks, I will hopefully still be taking part in Bump projects in 2020, or anything else, time permitting.



## Assistant Secretary - Richard Cain



I am now beginning the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of inspecting all our cable chambers within our geographical area with the assistance of Steve Rhodes. It may no be the most glamorous job (or best smelling!) but can be very rewarding. In the last year we have really started to see some good improvements in most of the chambers we inspect. From the crumbling flooded messes to the 'showroom' quality, they offer me plenty of entertainment.

Unfortunately, though we simply cannot get around all of them as quickly we want to, to really make sure the improvements are getting done on time. Processes

have been changed and we are constantly reviewing how we can do things better, in order to keep everyone safe.

As I stated last year, I have been working in my other role as an Assistant Secretary to the branch, learning as many new things as I can. This has now evolved into managing our branch website and attending more industrial relations meetings. After Pete Francis was elected to his new role, we had to have a mid-term re-allocation of roles and responsibilities for branch officers, which has resulted

with me now having a lead role for the branch with TSO or Technology Services. By the time you are reading this I will have attended my second meeting with TSO.

Another year, another role. Much like my last report I have recently begun the role of Union Learning Rep, for which I attended part one of the training at the CWU education facility, Alvescot Lodge, a couple of months ago. As I learn more about this new role, I hope will get to meet more of you to help with whatever I can.



**Unloved Cable Chambers**

## Lewes - Law, from King to Commoner



As our local hero's part of our annual report, I thought instead of a person I'd use an event, and that event was in 1264 in Lewes, East Sussex.

Lewes, the county town of East Sussex, and home to an unusual telephone exchange, has always had some importance in history. There is evidence of ancient Britons around the town, the Romans, the Saxons and lastly the Normans.

England at the time was ruled by Henry III, who needed to raise taxes in order to buy the throne of Sicily, for his succession. The Barons, as a collective, insisted on representation and Henry, initially agreed and then reneged on the agreement, which led to open conflict in the South East.

Henry captured the towns of Tonbridge and Winchelsea before heading to Lewes castle. However, his journey across the Weald was harried by bowmen, in the employ of the Barons leader, Simon de Montfort.

When De Montfort marched his forces from London he camped his army at Fletching (near Uckfield) before moving to Lewes.

Early on the morning of May 14<sup>th</sup>, De Montfort moved his forces to the hill at Offham. Henry with his son Edward (the future king Edward I "Longshanks") marched out to meet him to give battle.

To cut the story short, Henry lost and retreated back to Lewes, narrowly escaping with his life. De Montfort

and his collective Barons had won the day and negotiated the terms of surrender. The result of which was the document the "Mise of Lewes", which has since been lost to history.

They cemented the need for representation in a government and helped enshrine common law (from an earlier agreement), confirming the importance of the common law of the land for all, from King to commoner!

As a collective, the Barons nearly changed a dynasty.

What could we, as a union, do?

Perhaps the Sevenoaks is the next battle?

**EWU**



# BAME Officer - Animesh Kana



BAME and mental health issues that affect CWU members.

A CWU member was inquiring about the mental health issues facing BAME members:

And my reply, lot of people are aware of the issues facing BAME members. Also the laws that protect and employer’s obligations need to uphold there policies.

The CWU will uphold these laws and company policies.

I found the following information below:

In England and Wales, **nearly a fifth of people** come from a BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic) background. The mental health of BAME communities is important because people from these communities often face individual and societal challenges that can affect access to healthcare and overall mental and physical health.

It is important to note that BAME is an umbrella term that covers a wide range of people with a very diverse range of needs. Different ethnic groups have different experiences of mental health problems that reflect their culture and context.

This means that there is much more we still need to know about ethnicity and mental health in the UK.

Important influences on CWU BAME members in the work place affect’s on mental health

1. Racism and discrimination
2. Social and economic inequalities
3. Social and economic inequalities
4. Mental health stigma
5. Criminal justice system
6. Other factors

## Obituary

In the last year we have been notified of three members who have passed away. The Branch recognises their long service and life. Our warmest thoughts and sympathies go out to their families:

**Charles Goldsmith  
Neil Jenkins  
Veronica Kelly**

*Not how did he die, but how did he live.  
Not what did he gain, but what did he give  
These are the units to measure the worth  
Of a man as a man, regardless of birth.*

*ANON*



# Retired Members - Dave Lomakin



An interesting year has now thankfully finished. Changes in government leadership, the December election and the realisation of finally leaving the EU partnership. The pressure placed on the retired community has started to evolve. The loss of the free TV licence for those over 75 years of age will start this year and any method to gain at least some re-establishment of concession will be difficult. The eligible age to receive the state pension is continuing to create suspicion, new proposals from the “Centre for Social Justice” proposes the qualifying age to be raised to 70 by 2025 and 75 by the year 2035. The well established safe guard to the state pension increases, “The Triple Lock”, which keeps the value of the pension in line with inflation and wage increases is viewed in Conservative literature as an aggravation

may very soon come under threat and dissolved as well as reducing or ceasing the universal winter weather payments and winter fuel allowance. The free bus pass and concessionary train travel advantages may become uncertain privileges for the Retired community.

The commitment by BT to reduce the pension fund deficit is starting to progress and hopefully will by 2025 show the fund operating on an even keel, which would give existing beneficiaries and future recipients a greater confidence.

As the Branch Retired Members Secretary, I attend the CWU South East Region Retired Members Committee (SERRMC), addressing many retirement issues, progressing membership advantages and challenging the Pension agenda. From my position on the committee, I attend the Retirement and Pensions Committee at the TUC, in London, on behalf of the CWU. Unfortunately, this past year has been overshadowed by “BREXIT” and uncertainties produced by the Conservative leadership.

At this years CWU Retired Members Conference the motion submitted by SERRMC, was accepted unanimously to go forward to General Conference. The proposition enabled the CWU to engage in negotiations to promote the Social Care System being fully paid for via taxation and free for recipients, at the point of need.

Retiring soon? Or facing retirement options or even leaving BT? Be sure to enquire at any of our three Branch Offices about retaining CWU retirement status. This will enable you to receive CWU offers, legal services, will writing services and Union death benefit. Also, at Christmas, to receive a Branch Diary and pen, with a Christmas card.

I would extend my thanks to Branch Officers and Committee members for the interest, support and understanding, to myself and all retired members of our Branch.

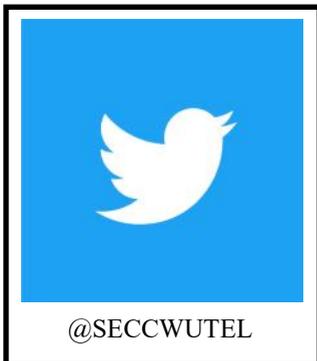


## Equality Officer - Steve Rhodes



I am currently the Equality Officer for the branch, I am not a full-time rep as I also work on the Brighton/ Tunbridge Wells frames team. I came to the Equality role when the previous officer retired, so I have not had a full 2-year term.

I support the branch with its Twitter account, it has been useful in the last year to be able to share fast changing information at branch level and across all CWU branches that also use Twitter. Currently we are using it to share information about the



#ourhours campaign. I hope we can use social media more frequently in the future. If you use Twitter, don't forget to follow us at @SECCWUTEL or Facebook by searching for "CWU SEC Noticeboard".

I anticipate to continue and further my union training this year and have registered for the CWU's Advanced Union skills, which will help me serve the members and the branch better.

It is an exciting time in the CWU at the moment, with project Redesign in full swing, the structure of the Equalities department is still changing shape.

Regional meetings have only just started again with new Equalities strain leads being appointed.

As a union, we continue to fight for Equality, supporting LGTB+, fighting for Women's rights, supporting black workers who are faced with discrimination and issues faced by workers with disabilities.

This year, we have decided to support the Equalities department, by sponsoring a month/page in the Equalities calendar that they produce. Together with our Women's Rep Una, we had an SEC WOMEN's lunch

time meeting and while they were all together, we took group pictures which one of will be used on the March page, as we thought that being the 8<sup>th</sup> March is National Women's Day, it would be appropriate. Thanks to Una and her ladies for helping it to happen.



There is a continued focus on Mental health within the Union, training for Reps (including Mental Health First Aid) as well as initiatives to give people with mental health a better voice and at the same time break down some of the barriers and stigma that there is



around mental health.

If you feel that you have a mental health issue or that it could affect your work at any time, please do not hesitate to call one of our branch reps for advice.

There is currently a national campaign called “OUR HOURS”, we are fully supporting this. As not only do we feel it is unfair to ask employees in some cases, to work up to 10 hours a week



unpaid, but that it is also having an effect on engineer’s home lives. Engineers with family responsibilities, not just child care but also caring for other family members. It can also just have an adverse effect on their mental health,

through just not getting enough down-time.

As a branch we have produced a YouTube video/ song to support the campaign which was fun to be involved with. However, it is a serious subject and we hope it can help to inform all Openreach employees that we need things to change. Just search for “SEC OUTLAWS OUR HOURS” on YouTube and have a listen.

## What does EQUALITY mean to you?



**These words represent what the Equality Act 2010 deem to be Protected Characteristics**

**If you feel any of them describe you or your situation, under the EQUALITY Acts 2010, you are protected from discrimination in the workplace.**

**However, things like BULLYING and HARRASSMENT are also covered by the Equality Act 2010.**

**So don’t stay quiet. If you have any worries, please speak up.**

**Your CWU Union Branch are ready to listen.**

# Meeting Dates 2020 - 21

Members of the South East Central, CWU Branch, are advised that the following meetings are open to all members:

General	Wednesday 6th May 2020	Tunbridge Wells
General	Wednesday 16th Sept 2020	Brighton
AGM	Wednesday, 17th Feb 2021	Sevenoaks

Meeting venues will be advised closer to the time. Special Meetings may be called to address urgent issues and notified to you via the email address we have for you.

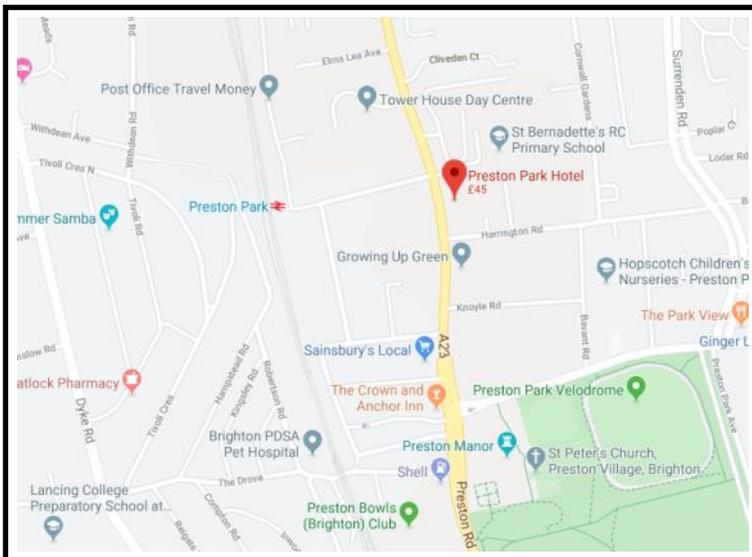
Committee members are advised that the following meetings are open to committee members

Committee Meeting	Tuesday, 7th Apr 2020	Uckfield
Committee Meeting	Tuesday, 7th July 2020	Uckfield
Committee Meeting	Tuesday, 13th Oct 2020	Uckfield
Committee Meeting	Tuesday, 5th Jan 2021	Uckfield

Think you could help? Think you could do better? Make yourself known to the branch and join our committee. Ring any of the officers on the contact list for more details.

Dates of all meetings are advertised on the website [www.cwusec.org.uk](http://www.cwusec.org.uk)

## Map of the 2020 AGM venue, Preston Park Hotel, 216 Preston Road, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 6UU



**South East Central**

## Current Points of Contact

		<u>Telephone No</u>	<u>Mobile No</u>
Branch Secretary:	Chris Power cwu.sec.br@btinternet.com	01273 565771	07850 840581
Branch Chair:	David Kauffman chair.sec.tw@btinternet.com	01892 522948	07850 815644
Financial Secretary: (& Asst Sec)	Steve Taylor cwu.sec.finsec@btinternet.com	01892 522948	07377 880526
Assistant Secretary	Peter Francis cwu.sec.assistsec@btinternet.com	01732 742222	
Assistant Secretary	Richard Cain cwu.sec.assistrjc@btinternet.com		07435 666036
Safety Officer: (Vice Chair)	Rick Cobern rick.cobern@cwusec.org.uk	01732 742222	07498 923159
Political Officer:	Di Hill dianne.hill1@btinternet.com		07747 193133
Women's Officer:	Una McMahon una.secwomen@cwusec.org.uk	01732 742222	
Equality Rep	Steve Rhodes equality@cwusec.org.uk		07764 338836
Retired Members Sec	Dave Lomakin via cwu.sec.tw@btinternet.com	01892 522948	
Youth Officer	Vacant via cwu.sec.tw@btinternet.com		
BAME Officer	Animesh Kana via cwu.sec.tw@btinternet.com	01732 742222	

**Contacts will change after the AGM Elections**



**South East Central Branch**  
*Annual General Meeting*

**Preston Park Hotel**

**216 Preston Road, Brighton**

**BN1 6UU**

On

**Wednesday 19th February**

**7.30pm**

The agenda will include the submission of the Annual report, Branch officers/ committee elections and any proposals pertinent to an AGM. i.e. Changes to branch bye laws and any proposals for the forthcoming year including financial proposals, and proposals to the Unions Annual Conference in April.

The meeting will conclude with any questions, current issues time permitting.

**There will be a buffet provided for members in addition to a drink at the bar**

**YOUR CHANCE TO HAVE YOUR SAY**  
**PLEASE ATTEND**