

annual report 2022

OFFICERS

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Professor Keith Ewing

Chairperson:

Lord John Henty QC

Treasurer:

Geoffrey D Shears

Senior Vice President:

Carolyn Jones

Director:

Ben Sellers

INTRODUCTION

In 2021 we were still largely working from home as a result of intermittent Covid-19 lockdown measures. During this uncertain time, we did our utmost to promote the solutions for workers as a post-covid financial crash threatened, and job losses across whole sectors started to bite. In February this situation was made more uncertain, as the global landscape changed when Russia invaded Ukraine. Our experts realised that workers' rights often slip down the political agenda during times of recession and war, in favour of uncritical patriotic narratives. We believe the trade union movement needs a common set of demands to put workers' rights at the top of any economic recovery and to reverse the tide of chaos that decades of free market failures have brought us. We see it as our job to arm the labour movement with the ideas needed to win meaningful victories on the ground, and we believe we have the credibility to unite the trade union movement around our common demands for a 'New Deal for Workers'.

ADMINISTRATION

In late October James returned to our office as lockdown restrictions were lifted, getting our office processes back up and running.

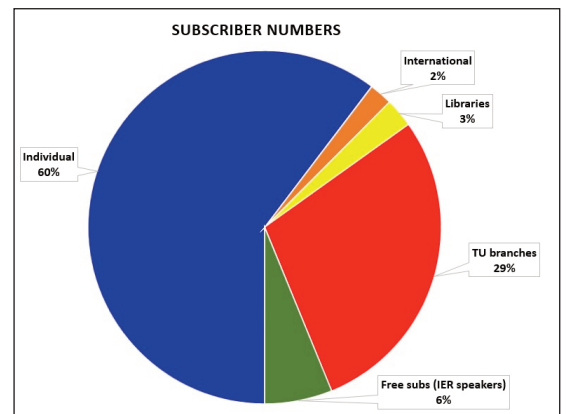
In November Sarah, our Development Officer decided to move to pastures new, and went to work for the NAHT. Sarah's insight, skills and expertise will be sorely missed. Also in November, Cad stepped down as our long serving Director, and Ben Sellers was appointed as the new IER Director. Ben has wide ranging experience and connections across the trade union movement, and is skilled in communications, having worked on social media campaigns for both Jeremy Corbyn MP when he was leader of the opposition, and Laura Pidcock MP.

As well as Ben and James adjusting to a new team dynamic, we have made it a priority to recruit a new member of staff to replace Sarah. We appointed Christopher Boyle to our new Communications Assistant role in March. Amongst other things, Chris will be delivering our new communications strategy, informed by Ben's ideas about how to popularise the IER amongst a new generation of workers.

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MEMBERS AND SUBSCRIBERS



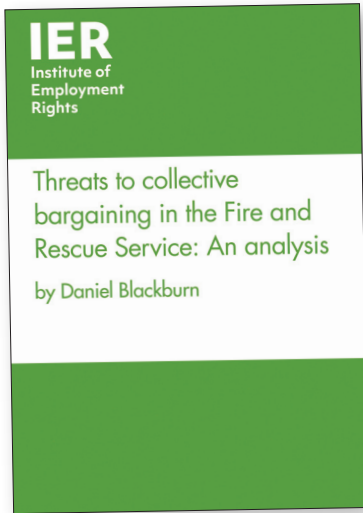
Our membership figures currently stand at 76 (+0), of which 37 are trade union representatives.

We have a total of 373 (+35) paid subscribers on our database. Of those, 225 (+6) are individuals, 107 (+38) are trade union branches, 10 (-11) are commercial libraries, 8 (-1) are international, and 23 (+4) are free subscriptions gifted to our speakers. Of these, reduced rate subscriptions (mainly students paying £25) now stand at 55 (+6).

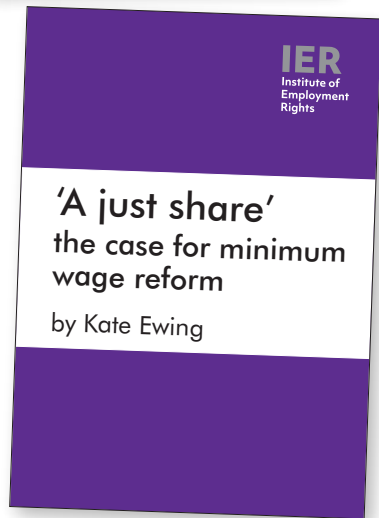
During lockdown we did some work to seek out multiple user licenses for online only subscriptions. This attracted 2 international subscribers, 2 individual subscribers, 15 commercial subscribers, as well as 254 trade union subscribers (TUC, Unite UONC, and AEP users).

While most paid subscribers continue to manage their accounts offline, 111 subscribers currently pay their dues through PayPal, down by 12% on last year.

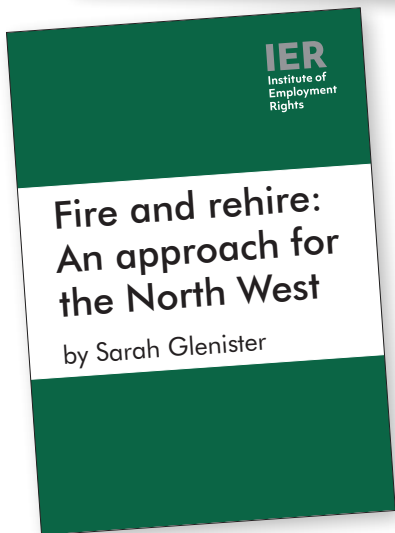
The largest demographic increase has been trade union branches, we assume as a result of branches now being back in the workplace and picking up their post, as well as having branch meetings and access to their cheque books. The next biggest leap was the online only subscriptions which we hope to retain and expand on, as it's a more immediate way to spread our material and it keeps printing costs down. We are considering how best to promote subscriptions and boost subscriptions of all types, as we plan to go to union conferences in the coming year, and reconnect with potential readers.



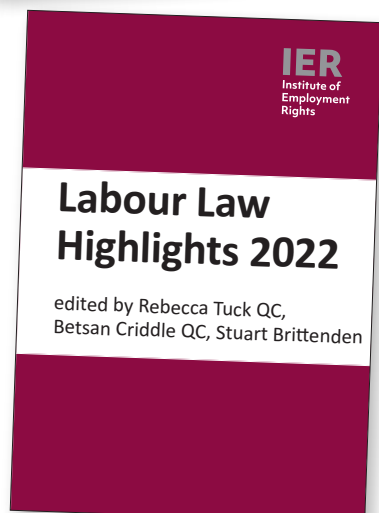
Threats to collective bargaining in the Fire and Rescue Service: An analysis
by Daniel Blackburn



'A just share' the case for minimum wage reform
by Kate Ewing



Fire and rehire: An approach for the North West
by Sarah Glenister



Labour Law Highlights 2022
edited by Rebecca Tuck QC, Betsan Criddle QC, Stuart Brittenden

Income from online conferences and events decreased to just under £401, a reduction of 90% from the previous year. This is mainly because our in-person event were on hold, and our online events were predominantly free. We hope to pick this up in the new year and test the water for some in person events again.

5,245 (+35) readers now subscribe to our electronic subscription list to receive weekly news briefs and promotions.

PROJECTS, COMMISSIONS AND PUBLIC POLICY WORK

We have successfully completed our two year health and safety project, with the assistance of our 11 health and safety experts and most particularly, Professors Phil James and David Waters who co-authored the final comprehensive book, *Work and health: 50 years of regulatory failure*. We aim to launch the book on 19th July 2022, the 50th anniversary of the Robens Report being presented to Parliament. The book highlights the changing nature of the world of work and the need for radical reform of our framework of labour law, including but not restricted to our health and safety laws and enforcement mechanisms.

This year also saw the completion of Professor Phil Taylor's empirical research informing Stage 1 of our 3 year project looking at the redistribution of working time. Based on that work, the Alex Ferry Foundation has now agreed to fund Stage 2 of the project, which will involve IER working with CSEU members and three targeted companies to negotiate shorter working time collective agreements based on the priorities identified by the workers in those companies.

Our project work on Fire and Rehire, both with Barry Gardner and the North West TUC helped set expectations on what could be achieved if the political will existed. The report for the North West TUC is due to be launched in July in the North West. The original work and briefings prepared for Barry Gardiner, MP by John Hendy and Keith Ewing, though unsuccessful in the Commons did raise the profile of this vital issue for the labour movement.

In terms of Commissions, Daniel Blackburn's excellent IER report for the FBU *Threats to collective bargaining in the Fire and Rescue Service: An analysis* was warmly welcomed by FBU members and has provided timely arguments for the FBU to use in their response to the long awaited and recently published Government White paper on the fire service.

Given the attacks on the FBU and the dissatisfaction with the current round of recommendations emerging from Pay Review Bodies, our thoughts now are turning to building on the excellent discussion at our 2021 cross-union round table discussion on *Pay Review Bodies v Collective Bargaining*. It would seem that now is a good time to draft a report on the history, role, purpose and future of pay review bodies.

In terms of public policy work, Kate Ewing kindly drafted an IER response to the Low Pay Commission on the National Minimum Wage, which has been extremely well received.

PUBLICATIONS

During this year we have begun to get back toward pre-pandemic levels of publication production. We've produced the following publications:

- A publication from a commissioned piece of work for the FBU on 'Threats to collective bargaining in the Fire and Rescue Service: An analysis' by Daniel Blackburn.
- 'A just share' the case for minimum wage reform', by Kate Ewing.
- A publication produced for TUC North West 'Fire and rehire: An approach for the North West' by Sarah Glenister.
- 'Labour Law Highlights 2022', by the Old Square Chambers team.

PUBLICATIONS PLANNED FOR 2022/2023

- *The gender pay gap – multiple authors*
- *Migrant workers' rights – Manoj Dias-Abey and Katie Bales, Bristol Uni.*
- *Work & Health: 50 years of regulatory failure – Health and Safety Expert Group*
- *Redistribution of working time – Phil Taylor*
- *Labour law highlights 2023 – Old Square Chambers team*
- *Environment & work: a just transition – Prof David Whyte & Ben Crawford*
- *Fire and rehire – tbc*
- *Union organising – winning strategies for the movement*

In 2021, the 4th edition of the IER/Pluto International Journal was published. The contents included our publication 'Brexit and workers' rights' by Prof Keith Ewing and Prof Nicola Countouris, 'International H&S standards after Brexit' by Prof David Whyte and Andrew Moretta, and 'Trade unions and economic inequality' by Prof Lydia Hayes and Prof Tonia Novitz. We are still reviewing the open access model to see how much income it brings in, versus making some of our older content free and more widely distributing it across the world.

CONFERENCES & EVENTS

In 2021-2022 the institute hosted 7 online events, and an in person Labour Party fringe meeting. 'Employment law update', was once again our highest attended paid event. Our free events have been streamed across several social media platforms, with numbers of viewers reaching over 7,000 people for the 'May Day – Resist, Repeal, Replace' event.

ONLINE EVENTS IN 2021-2022

- **May day – Resist, Repeal, Replace – Saturday 1st May 2021**
- **Automation: negotiating a fair deal when technological improvements are made – Tuesday 22nd June**
- **Trade unions, unemployment and workers'**

Events and fringes

Resist – Repeal – Replace
On International workers' day join us to celebrate trade union victories, organise for resistance against authoritarianism and plan for a fundamental change in workers' rights in Britain.

Lord John Hendy QC, Prof Keith Ewing, Kate Ewing, Mick Rice (GMB), Yvette Williams (Grassroots Black List), Andy Green (CTUF), Gw North West Buses, Sarah Woodcock (Bakers Union), Paddy Little (USDAW), Maxine Peako

11:00am – 12:30pm – Saturday 1st May 2021
Book your place here: <https://tinyurl.com/UnionPower2021>

1 MAY
LONDON METROPOLITAN POLICE COMMISSIONER
MorningStar **TRIBUNE**

Automation – negotiating a fair deal when technological improvements are made
Profit and possibility for workers - exploring the worst and the best of automation transition

Dr Leo Impett, Louisa Bull, James Farrar

7:00pm – Tuesday 22nd June 2021
Book your place here: <https://tinyurl.com/IERAutomation2021>

Trade Unions, unemployment and workers' rights
Creating a reserve army of unemployed is bad for the economy, for workers and for public health

Martin Cavanagh, Brett Sparkes, Helen O'Connor, Carolyn Jones, Tony Burke

7:00pm – Wednesday 7th July 2021
Book your place here: <https://tinyurl.com/IER-unemployment-21>

Human rights and employment rights
How might workplace rights look in the future?

Dr Philippa Collins, Prof Keith Ewing, Josie Irwin, Carolyn Jones

7:00pm – Wednesday 21st July 2021
Book your place here: <https://tinyurl.com/IER-HumanRights2021>

In conversation: 'The shadow of the mine'
No one personified the age of industry more than the miners. This book tells the story of King Coal in its heyday – and what happened to mining communities after the last pits closed.

Prof Keith Ewing, Lord John Hendy QC, Prof Huw Beynon, Carolyn Jones

6:00pm – Thursday 29th July 2021
50% off the book for those in attendance!
Book your place here: <https://tinyurl.com/IER-ShadowOfTheMine>

A NEW DEAL FOR WORKERS

Dr Jo Grady, Prof Keith Ewing, Lord John Hendy QC, Barry Gardiner MP, Carolyn Jones, Christina McAnea

6:30pm – Sunday 12th September 2021
Book your zoom place here: <https://tinyurl.com/IERTUC2021>

Employment Law update 2021

Rebecca Tuck QC, Prof Keith Ewing, Jo Seery, Rohan Pirani, Paul Scholoy

10:00am – 13:35pm Thurs 21st October
Only £10. Book your zoom place here: <https://tinyurl.com/IERELU2021>

rights – Wednesday 7th July (joint with CTUF)

- Human rights and employment rights – Wednesday 21st July
- Employment law update – Thursday 21st October 2021

ONLINE EVENTS FOR 2021-2022

We are currently considering whether some in person labour law events will be viable towards the end of 2022, and will be announcing our plans for events this year in the weekly newsletter.

COMMUNICATIONS & DIGITAL DEVELOPMENTS

The past year has been one of change on the communications front. Long standing member of staff Sarah Glenister left for a job at the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT). Whilst that was a wonderful opportunity for Sarah, it left us without a communications officer – and an awful lot of experience and knowledge. For a period, as an interim measure, the various parts of Sarah's role were divided between new Director Ben Sellers and Deputy Director James Harrison.

Soon after Sarah's departure for pastures new, it was decided that the post to replace Sarah would be advertised as a Communications Assistant, with a slight reconfiguration of roles and responsibilities. The recruitment process began at the end of January and in March, we appointed Chris Boyle to the job. The new role is more focused on the purely communications side of the job, so website stories, the weekly newsletter, press releases and contacts, social media, and video. Chris comes with a wide experience of communications and knowledge of social media and PR.

Obviously, this is a period of transition, while we adjust to new roles and coming out of the pandemic. However, there has been a regular flow of articles and news stories on the IER website, which have been shared via the newsletter, an increase in social media posts and an addition to our social media platforms, in LinkedIn. LinkedIn is a platform specifically about employment and work, so it is ideal for more in-depth discussions of the workplace. We hope to generate a sharp rise in followers and engagements on LinkedIn over the next year.

As a team, we've formulated a communications strategy which prioritises building our social media accounts and reaching new audiences. That may mean making our social media more conversational and accessible, trying to reach more of the labour movement and the public by getting articles into a wider range of publications and using video and infographics to engage a younger audience. In relation to the latter, we are also looking at introducing an Instagram account to the IER's social media armoury.

We've seen a steady increase in our current social media accounts. Facebook has grown

from 1,309 followers this time last year, to 1,818 (a 39% increase). And our Twitter account has grown from 3,281 to 4,499 during the same period (a 37% increase).

At the same time as developing the range of our social media output, we have started the process of mapping our current and potential audiences, in terms of awareness of the IER's work and regularly analysing our social media stats and reach, including analytics that tell us what the age, gender and geographical profile is. This will be part of a long-term approach to extend the reach of our website news, articles, blogs, videos, briefings, and publications.

Website use has seen a slight drop off after a peak following the redesign of the website in 2020. In the last year, it has dropped 8.7%. Apart from the P&O articles mentioned above, the most popular stories on the website over the last year has been a piece on the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill (An IER guide) and a similar resource on the 2016 Trade Union Act. These guides and briefings are IER staples, and they are very important to our core audience.

In recent months, the P&O story has dominated our website content and social media. Professor Keith Ewing wrote a three-part dissection of the scandal, which was shared extensively across social media and John Hendy wrote a piece which set the P&O sackings in the context of diminishing employment rights and restrictions on solidarity action. The P&O scandal has not only connected with a section of the general public, but it also bears out the issues that the IER have highlighted for a number of decades, so it is a pivotal story. So, it was significant that these articles achieved an impressive reach, partly due to the beginnings of a new social media strategy beginning to emerge.

Over the last year, we have continued our excellent relationship with the Morning Star, and we have had over a dozen published pieces in the MS over the last year, plus many more articles that have included quotes from staff and officers. It is a vitally important link, but we are also looking at how we can expand our coverage to other newspapers, magazines, and papers as part of our review of our comms strategy, we are building a more extensive press list.

CONCLUSION

The covid pandemic was a difficult time for us all. At IER we shifted our working to accommodate the challenges of the day. In the last quarter of this year the real challenge has been shifting back to older processes whilst reviewing what worked well during lockdown. With new staff ready to take on post-pandemic challenges, this will no doubt take some interim adjustment to reinstate our usual efficient ways of working. The staff and our experts are up to that challenge, and we are confident we will deliver as always, for the work that lays ahead.

IER Officers & EC 2021

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Geoffrey D Shears

Senior Vice President:
Carolyn Jones

Director:
Ben Sellers

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Sharon Graham *UNITE*

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Professor Sonia McKay

Professor Tonia Novitz

Christina McAnea *UNISON*

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Mickey Rubenstein

Claire Sullivan *CSP*

Gordon Taylor *PFA*

Rebecca Tuck *Old Square Chambers*

Mick Whelan *ASLEF*

Matt Wrack *FBU*

IER Budget Report 2021-22

Year to 31st March 2022

£s	Budget 2021-22	Actual Q4 2021/22	Actual Q4 2020/21
INCOME			
Sales of Publications	8,000	1,836	5,194
Donations	116,528	85,957	79,653
Subscriptions	22,000	25,520	23,613
Sponsorship	1,000	1,900	1,200
Seminar/Online Events	FREE	401	3,934
Royalties	400	329	307
Commissioned Work	15,000	25,674	0
Project Development	10,000	8,582	7,226
Advertising	1,000	935	360
TOTAL INCOME	173,928	151,133	121,487
EXPENDITURE			
Printing: Promotional (inc packs & publicity)	1,500	795	110
Printing: Publications	15,000	700	2,139
Design Work	3,000	925	1,200
Salaries	97,748	99,256	84,451
Rent	5,500	2,420	3,526
Sundries	1,500	1,139	636
Advertising	1,000	1,424	614
Insurance	600	611	670
Room Hire (& Refrshts)	0	0	0
Professional/project Fees	25,000	13,388	638
C&E Hotels	0	0	0
C&E Fares	0	0	0
Travel	500	753	0
Telephones	1,250	694	849
Office Stationery	500	243	326
Postage: Couriers	750	419	-2
Postage: Mailing	5,000	2,174	1,862
Repairs & maintenance	500	223	0
IT Development	4,000	3,701	3,508
Bank Charges	500	486	545
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	163,848	129,351	101,073
EXP minus PDF			
Surplus/deficit	10,080	21,781	20,414
Money in bank		85,749	66,407
Bills to be paid		3,936	0
Invoices owed to us		1,439	6,328
Donation invoices owed			-