

annual report 2023

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

During the last year, we have seen the highest levels of inflation in recent times. The cost of living has skyrocketed. This, coupled with flat lining pay for over a decade and public sector pay restraint, has starkly reminded the general public why trade unions exist – to protect the real terms incomes and conditions of workers. With Bank of England bosses fuelling the mythology that it is pay increases that cause inflation, while corporate profits soar and real pay plummets, it has become more obvious to the general public that it is not workers creating this crisis, but neoliberal profiteering. This has reversed some of the public perceptions of unions presented by successive governments.

Unions have seen an upturn in popularity again, with key union figures sparring with, and skilfully winning debates against, a hostile mass media. This no doubt holds some hope for the future of trade unionism in the UK, as well as for future generations of workers.

However, as well as the key possibilities for unions in these times, there are also great threats from a political establishment who, rather than address the fundamental issues facing the country, seek to suppress any form of protest, whether political or industrial. The passing of the Police Crime Courts and Sentencing Act and the Public Order Act both point to an increasingly authoritarian state.

As of yet, neither of these have been used against picketers, but without inherent protections for unions and the right to strike, it would be naïve to think that they will not use them against unions at some point. Add to this the ramping up of powers the Certification Officer can use against trade unions when receiving a complaint from anyone (including employers) – with hugely increased potential fines – and it starts to paint a picture of a political campaign against trade unions, similar to that pursued by Margaret Thatcher’s government – only with more ambition to curtail basic freedoms.

With the recent lifting of the ban on agency workers being used as strike-breakers during industrial disputes, and additional uncertainty around what workers’ rights may or may not be scrapped under the Government’s Retained EU Law Bill later in the year, it seems clear that workers’ rights are under serious threat from a number of angles.

The most pernicious of these threats comes in the form of the proposed Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill. This legislation flies in the face of a number of fundamental human rights, against the EU/UK trade deal, and will effectively give Ministers unlimited powers to make strikes ineffective, fine unions, and effectively ‘conscript’ workers for the first time since the Second World War. It is looking more and more like a huge battle for unions is on the horizon, and as ever, the Institute will be on hand to support the trade unions and other organisations seeking to defend their members, and civil freedoms.

To this end the Institute, in partnership with the Campaign for Trade Union Freedom produced a report, *Workers’ Rights in Times of Crisis*, which was made free to download from our website. The publication speaks to the long wish list of anti-trade union legislation the Government are seeking to impose, and finishes with a Bill of rights which our experts believe will inform the counter-strategy against such restrictive practices, and for positive rights for workers.

ADMINISTRATION

In March 2022 we took on a Communications Assistant to re-establish our staffing compliment back up to 3 people. Sadly, after a few months it became clear that they were not capable of undertaking the role in the way we needed, so we had to let them go in August.

This led us to have a re-think about the traditional division of labour in the team, and we decided that, to play to some of the strengths of the current staff, we could appoint an office administrator, leaving Ben to do some of the communications work, and James to do some of the projects and income work. In March 2023 we appointed our new administrator Derek Kotz who will be undertaking his training over the next few months, and when fully trained, will take some of the lengthier administrative tasks off Ben and James, freeing up their time to address some of the shortfalls in certain income streams, manage important projects and apply for funding.

MEMBERS AND SUBSCRIBERS

Our membership figures currently stand at 77 (+1), of which 38 are trade union representatives.

We have a total of 341 (-32) paid subscribers on our database. Of those, 191 (-34) are individuals, 118

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IER
Institute of
Employment
Rights

IER Officers & EC 2022

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IER Budget Report 2022-23

Year to 31st March 2023

£s	Budget 2022-23	Actual Q4 2022/23	Actual Q4 2021/22
INCOME			
Sales of Publications	5,000	3,909	1,836
Donations	96,000	91,023	85,957
Subscriptions	25,000	16,855	25,520
Sponsorship	1,000	750	1,900
Seminar/online Events	5,000	3,740	401
Royalties	400	337	329
Commissioned Work	10,000	0	25,674
Project Development	22,000	23,194	8,582
Advertising	1,000	460	935
TOTAL INCOME	165,400	140,268	151,133
EXPENDITURE			
Printing: Promotional (inc packs & publicity)	4,000	2,754	795
Printing: Publications	12,000	10,394	700
Design Work	3,400	2,591	925
Salaries	104,000	102,242	99,256
Rent	6,000	4,671	2,420
Sundries	4,500	5,024	1,139
Advertising	1,500	1,468	1,424
Insurance	700	713	611
Room Hire (& refrshts)	1,000	24	0
Professional/project Fees	10,700	8,586	13,388
C&E Hotels	1,000	1,308	0
C&E Fares	250	42	0
Travel	3,000	3,441	753
Telephones	600	440	694
Office Stationery	1,050	687	243
Postage: Couriers	1,000	825	419
Postage: Mailing	5,000	4,232	2,174
Repairs & maintenance	500	0	223
IT Development	4,000	3,126	3,701
Bank Charges	600	487	486
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	164,800	153,055	129,351
Surplus/deficit	600	-12,787	21,781
Money in bank		72,083	85,749
Bills to be paid		0	3,936
Invoices owed to us		5,010	1,439
Donation invoices owed		-	-