

NEYH news

Unite news from across our region

A woman with short grey hair, wearing a black wide-brimmed hat, glasses, and a grey jacket over a white lace collar, is smiling and holding a historical newspaper. The newspaper is titled "The War Paper for Women VOTES FOR WOMEN" and features a large illustration of a building. The headline on the newspaper reads "PENNY WISE IS POUND FOOLISH".

AS WE CELEBRATE 100 YEARS SINCE WOMEN WON THE VOTE, FIND OUT INSIDE HOW WOMEN MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO UNITE

KAREN REAY, REGIONAL SECRETARY, TALKS ABOUT THE CHALLENGES WE FACE

Karen Reay
Regional Secretary



The past year has presented us with both challenges and opportunities in equal measure. Against a backdrop of uncertain economic conditions and political change, Unite the union have won several landmark decisions which will benefit not only our members, but members from right across the movement.

Over the course of the last 12 months Unite has secured two significant rulings at employment tribunals. One, against Kostal, centred on the company's attempts to induce our members into giving up their collective trade union rights. With the support of Unite Legal Services, our members were awarded compensation of £420,000 between them.

The second ruling involved a Unite member diagnosed with a pre-cancerous lesion who was dismissed for having too much sick leave. Ruling in our member's favour, the tribunal found that 'pre-cancer' is a form of cancer and, as such, should be treated in the same way under the Equality Act. Both of these cases provide wide reaching security for workers right across the country.

The collapse of Carillion left

hundreds of thousands of workers facing an uncertain future, as well as leaving hundreds of construction projects in limbo. The company, which provided support for services right across the UK and abroad, as well as major public construction works, was brought to its knees under the weight of massive debts. Just prior to the collapse the company sought the help of the Government, asking for public money to keep it afloat. There can be no clearer example of the widening gap between workers and shareholders and also why privatising public services and contracts is the wrong way to go.

Our NHS has suffered following the collapse of Carillion, with hospital building projects and managed services being left with an uncertain future. This is on top of the ongoing privatisation of our NHS. Having worked in the NHS for many years, I am deeply concerned about the future of our NHS. The ideological attack by the Tory Government is ripping the service apart and leaving patients facing long waiting times and staff facing more and more pressure. A huge reduction in the number of people applying to work for the NHS is a ticking time bomb. It leaves patients at risk, and it gives the Tories more ammunition in their privatisation agenda. There has been no greater threat to our NHS than the current Government. The forcing through of Accountable Care Organisations will put the care of millions of people in the hands of small groups of providers who are motivated by profit

rather than patient care. Period poverty is a growing concern for many women in the UK as they are forced to choose between food and sanitary products. This issue has, in recent years, been highlighted in Parliament by Paula Sherriff MP and Unite are proud to be calling for a sustained campaign within the trade union movement to ensure that VAT is removed from sanitary products, that employers provide free sanitary products to women workers and that period poverty school campaigns are run via school health nurses.

Unite Community has continued to go from strength to strength and our Community members have been at the forefront of some key campaigns over the last 12 months. In particular they led a campaign to educate the public on the effects of Universal Credit. In the run up to Christmas they held stalls right across the UK to highlight the changes to the welfare system and impact they were having on claimants.

I recognise that the next year will have some unique challenges. The uncertainty of Brexit means that we must all keep a focus on the protection of workers' rights and also ensure that the

DEVELOPMENT AWARD

APPRENTICE JOURNEY

economy that emerges from Brexit is one that benefits the whole of society and not just the wealthy shareholders.

As well as the UK's position in the world, there will be an ongoing debate about devolution within the UK and Unite believes that there needs to be a rethinking of the approach to create 'Metro-Mayors'. The interests of the North of England can only be fully served by having a joined up approach to devolution and a system that promotes working together across the whole of the north, rather than in artificially constructed Mayoral Combined Authorities. The only way that this can be achieved is through a national constitutional convention that looks at how the whole of the north of England can work together to create long term prosperity and security for workers.

Political upheaval is clearly going to feature as much over the next year as it did over the last. The last 12 months have given hope to millions of people who voted for real change in last year's general election. The pledges in the Labour manifesto and the integrity of Jeremy Corbyn resonated with millions of people right across the UK. It is incumbent on us all to make sure that the momentum that we have had continues and that we seek the change that this country so badly needs and deserves, which can only be delivered by a Labour Government.

 **Morning Star**

This article first appeared in the Morning Star on Friday 23 March 2018

Laura Cunningham-Clarke is a mature, female, BAEM apprentice working in a male dominated environment, who has overcome a series of obstacles to be crowned Leeds City Council's Development Apprentice for 2018, beating eight other finalists.

In October 2014 Laura started working for Leeds City Council, through the "Re-make Leeds" scheme. The scheme was funded through the national lottery heritage scheme and was designed to offer 12 months' work experience to individuals who would usually find their opportunities limited.

When Laura left school with no formal qualifications, she started studying painting and decorating at college and became a carer for her grandad, which meant she found employment opportunities hard to come by. She was excited when the opportunity to gain some vital work experience came along and with the blessing of her grandad she grasped the opportunity with both hands.

Once Laura's 12 months with "Re-make Leeds" were complete, she took a job with the council, within Building Services, before applying for an apprenticeship six months later. Although Laura managed to secure an apprenticeship, there were still multiple challenges ahead. Due to Laura having already studied painting and decorating at college and completing a Level 2 Diploma, but not the full Level 2 NVQ, there was uncertainty around what work and evidence Laura would have to complete, to achieve the full qualification. This, along with

multiple changes in Assessors/Tutors resulted in a delay in getting started for Laura who finally commenced as an apprentice in September 2016, but wasn't allocated the correct units to give as evidence for her portfolio until February 2017. With the support and assistance of her colleagues and the Union she managed to complete her portfolio in June 2017 and more importantly, on time.

Laura received support and assistance from Neil Fullerton, the apprentice support co-ordinator for Leeds City Council Building Services department, as well as from Robert Blackshaw Unite ULR and other local Unite Officials. Their support and interventions enabled Laura to complete the qualification and address the break-



down in communication between the college and employer, without this support, namely from Neil and Robert, Laura said she would have probably walked away and given up. Moving into her second year, Laura said she feels more at ease and ready for the next set of challenges, following on from the issues she faced in her first year.

The apprenticeship through Leeds City Council was an opportunity to gain formal qualifications and training that Laura previously hadn't experienced and didn't believe she ever would and is thankful for the opportunity as it has changed her outlook and opinion on life in general and is now looking forward to the future and completing her NVQ level 3 with her new-found confidence.



WOMEN'S COMMITTEE BRINGS CHANGE AT CUMMINS

Unite organisers have been working with the Reps at Cummins, Huddersfield, at the start of their pay campaign in 2017. Chris Davies, Unite's Chairman, felt that women at Cummins were not only under-represented in Unite and at the negotiating table, but in the workplace too and felt the branch needed to make a positive change. Becky Feather, Organiser in the North East, Yorkshire and Humberside region came in to help and support reps, Caley Hunter and Diane Spurr, with setting up a Unite Women's Committee on their site.

The Reps were keen to get more women active within Unite as well as championing women's rights and supporting women through any difficulties they face. The Women's Committee gathered for the first time in the New Year, made up of reps and members. They decided the only way they could establish how women felt was by running a survey not only for their members, but for everyone.

Whilst devising their survey they quickly realised mental well-being was high on their agenda and felt they needed to open their survey up to all genders, as mental health doesn't discriminate. The Women's

Committee set themselves a target and they smashed it – increasing membership along the way! They distributed their survey through access days in the canteen, where they also promoted their committee and gained more committee members. They dropped surveys on their colleagues desks and the results came flooding in. The results were astonishing and something which Cummins simply couldn't ignore! Subjects raised included cleaning facilities, access to policies and mental health awareness. Although the responses were strictly confidential Unite was able to meet with the Leadership Team at Cummins to discuss the results and look at a way forward.

The meeting was very positive and the company agreed that changes needed to be made, some with immediate effect. As a direct result of the

actions the Committee have taken, the company have agreed to install more cleaning facilities in all areas of the site, improve women's facilities in the toilets and ensure all policies are readily available to all employees. Most importantly Unite are now holding discussions with Cummins to improve access to mental health support, through Unite's Mental Health First Aid courses. There is already a waiting list of over 40 people who expressed an interest in being trained for this vital support role. Caley Hunter said "We are here to listen, support, nurture, encourage and empower other women in the workplace and to also educate them in the wider support and aims of the trade union movement".

Following the success of the survey and the commitments by the company, the Women's Committee are moving forward and have generated lots of exciting ideas to engage with all women in the workplace as well as open events around equalities. The committee at Cummins can be easily identified by their vibrant pink lanyards and colour posters displayed around the site.



Unite Women's Committee members at Cummins

HOW BREXIT COULD AFFECT WOMEN

The EU has played a key role in protecting women’s rights. Over the years it has protected women from discrimination and inequality. While some of these protections existed in UK law, the EU built on and enhanced some of these rights and provides a floor for rights which no Member State can go below. In a post-Brexit Britain, these rights can not be taken for granted.

Equal pay for women:

The UK Equal Pay Act predates our EU membership. But it did not cover equal pay for work of equal value and it was EU law which led to many landmark victories, and pay rises, for women workers.

Paid holidays:

The EU working time directive gave the right to paid holiday for the first time to 2 million workers, many of them part-time women workers. Six million workers in total gained new or enhanced rights to paid leave from 1998.

Maternity rights:

EU law gave new rights to pregnant women, including the right to paid time off for antenatal appointments and new protection against pregnancy discrimination.

Returning to work:

A job of the same status and pay must be kept open for a woman on maternity leave. Becoming a parent no longer means the risk of losing your job.

Better rights for atypical workers:

The EU adopted equal treatment laws for part-time, fixed term, and agency workers, benefiting around 400,000 employees in the UK, 300,000 of them women.

Entitlement to pensions:

Pension poverty is a real problem for older women. Many part-time workers, mainly women, faced discrimination and were excluded from pension schemes, but EU law now ban such discrimination.

Supporting victims of violence:

Cross border cooperation is essential for safeguarding women and girls from domestic violence. The EU Protection Order protects women from perpetrators if they travel or move to anywhere in the EU.



KEY BREXIT DATES

23 June 2016

UK votes to leave the European Union

29 March 2017

Article 50 triggered

8 December 2017

Phase one completed after “sufficient progress” is made

October 2018

Negotiations end and the period of ratification opens with votes in both of the UK Houses of Parliament, the EU Council of Ministers (where the remaining 27 EU countries are represented) and the European Parliament.

30 March 2019

UK leaves the European Union

31 December 2020

EU proposed to end the transitional period

Source: Linda McAvan MEP for Yorkshire and the Humber

A NEW DEAL FOR WORKING PEOPLE

The TUC have called a national demonstration on 12 May 2018 in London.

The key message of the demonstration will be 'A New Deal for Working People' and we will seek to put pressure on the Government to end austerity

and invest in the economy.

We are providing transport for Unite members, family and friends from across our region and, if you would like to attend, please complete the online booking form



<https://goo.gl/forms/9bK89fY6yfe6hKV93>

or email neyh.12may@unitetheunion.org for more information

UNITE LAMBASTS DECISION TO BLOCK OPEN CAST COAL MINING IN NORTHUMBERLAND

Unite has lambasted the decision of communities secretary Sajid Javid to block the open cast coal mining development in Highthorn, Northumberland.

Mr Javid made the decision on the 'grounds of climate change' however it will result in UK industries such as steel, building products and concrete production having to import coal from overseas including from Russia, the United States and Colombia.

The Highthorn development would have created 100 well paid full time jobs and invested £87 million into the local economy. In blocking

the decision Javid ignored the recommendation of Northumberland county council and the Planning Inspector who both recommended approval.

The decision to cite 'climate change' fails to take into account that UK coal producers pay £23 a tonne in carbon tax and that Banks Group, which was behind the Highthorn development, is committed to totally reinstate the landscape when mining work is completed.

Unite national officer Jerry Swain said "This is a disgraceful decision which is all about political opportunism and not about climate change.

"This is the second time in a week after the passports fiasco that a north east

company has been kicked in the teeth by the government. At this time of economic uncertainty and when the north east is in most need of support, this decision is the height of political illiteracy.

"UK industries will still require millions of tonnes of coal every year and it can't be environmentally friendly to import it from the other side of the world.

"It is imperative that this short-sighted decision is overturned and that the Highthorn development is allowed to go ahead, this is in the best interests of the company, the region, the economy and the local workforce."

‘NOT RED, NOT BLUE, JUST JOBS. DON’T PASSPORT OUR JOBS AWAY’

MPs gathered on Wednesday 28 March to show solidarity with De La Rue workers who face an uncertain future as the government prepares to award a £490 million contract to produce the UK’s blue passports to a French competitor.

Using the passport photobooth set up by Unite the union at parliament, MPs took their passport picture to send to the prime minister to urge her to think again on her decision.

Trade union representatives from De La Rue travelled from Gateshead to join MPs and brief them on the impact the government’s decision will have on jobs and local economy.

Unite’s general secretary Len McCluskey said that this issue is “Not about whether our passports are red or blue. It is about defending UK jobs, industry and communities.”

Around 200 jobs are at risk, but the union fears others will follow unless work is found for the plants which have produced the UK passport without a hitch for the past decade.

Unite has urged MPs not to be taken in by claims that the contract winner Gemalto will create significant numbers of UK jobs. The sites the company has in the UK are not expected to take on passport work, with the printing of the new blue document to be done in France.



OBITUARY – CLIFF BERRY

It was with sadness that we learnt of the death of Cliff Berry on Friday, 15 December aged 87 years.

Many of you will have known Cliff as a former Regional Committee, Road Transport and Retired Members Committee delegate who dedicated his life to working people.

Cliff was also the Branch Chair of the former Leeds RTC branch and, along with his colleagues, worked tirelessly with many charities.

SIX-FIGURE COMPENSATION SECURED FOR MEMBER FOLLOWING BACK INJURY



Unite Legal Services has supported a West Yorkshire man, who suffered a severe back injury at work, to secure £100,000 in a compensation claim.

Andrew, 52, turned to Unite Legal Services for support after he injured his back lifting an 80kg machine guard that had jammed. The machine should have had a hydraulic guard as it was so heavy, and Andrew had complained to his employer about this before.

His employer had initially listened to his concerns and changed the machine, however, when the machine broke down they returned to using the faulty model that caused his injury.

Karen Reay, North East, Yorkshire and Humberside regional secretary at Unite the Union, said: "Unite Legal Services campaigns tirelessly to ensure our members remain safe in the workplace and that employers abide by health and safety regulations. Failure to do so can lead to life-altering injuries, as Andrew's needless accident shows."

Andrew had 18 months off work as a result of the injury and suffered depression. He now works in a lower-paid role for another employer, where he doesn't do heavy lifting.



my condition.

"I can't count the number of times I complained about the machine, and I wasn't alone.

We were right but it made no difference and I have suffered because of it. All I can hope is that my case will show my employer, and others, why health and safety is vitally important."

Karen added: "It's concerning that despite Andrew, on multiple occasions, raising issues about the machine, they were never acted upon. Using our legal expertise we were able to build a case against the employer so it could be held to account, but what a waste of a dedicated employee's health."

"I'm not the same person I was before the accident," the Unite member said. "Doctors have told me that I am 20 per cent disabled and that the pain in my back will never truly go away. At best, I can manage it. Fortunately, my new employer is understanding and makes sure I don't do anything to aggravate



Remember to keep up-to-date with Unite Legal Services at
www.unitelegalservices.org

UNITE SUPPORTS SHOW RACISM THE **RED** CARD



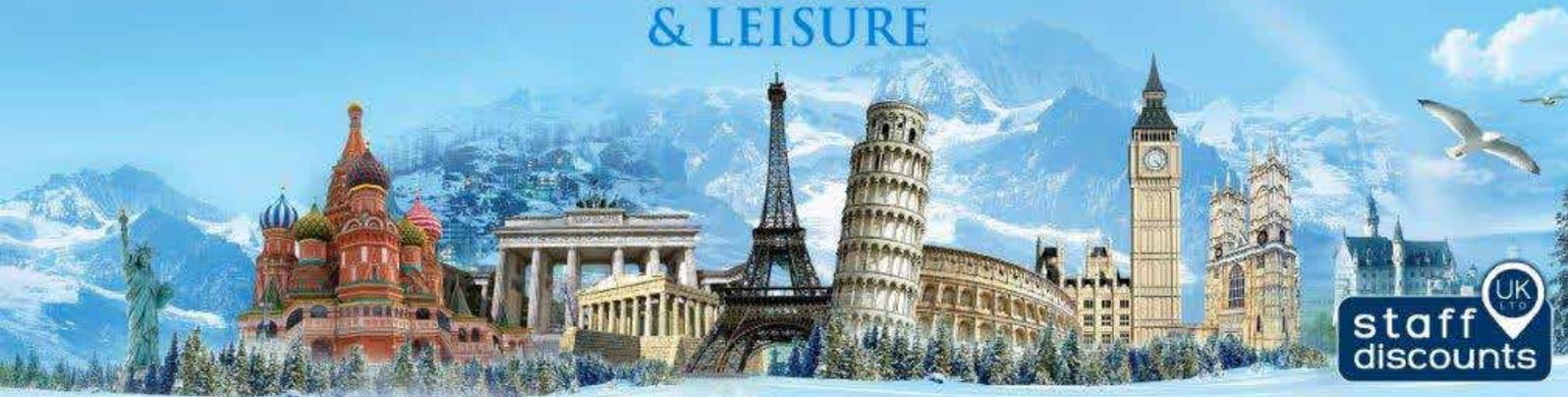
Unite the union are proud to sponsor and support Show Racism the Red Card.

Suzanne Reid, regional officer, was part of a judging panel at this year's SRtRC School Competition. Approximately 170 schools nationwide participated. Suzanne said "I was overwhelmed at the talent and effort which all children put into their entries, and felt immensely proud of all the children who want to active combat racism".

The School Ceremony of the School Competition will be held on 24 April 2018 at Stoke City FC, where the winners will be announced.

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UNITE LEGAL SERVICES SUPPORTS MEMBER FOLLOWING INJURY AT WORK

Unite Legal Services has secured £17,500 for a machine operator who was injured while working for a paper manufacturer.

He was loading paper bales into cargo netting with a forklift at the time of the accident. He spotted a section of the netting was tangled and, due to lack of space, had to walk over it. In doing so he lost his footing, tripped and hit his head, knocking him out.

He said: "When I came to, I had no idea where I was. I was surrounded by medical staff all trying to make sure I was ok – it was really worrying. After the initial shock of the accident I started to feel the pain in my ribs, which was excruciating."

The Unite member was taken to hospital by paramedics. Doctors

told him he had suffered a head injury and two rib fractures, and he needed a month off work for his fractures to heal.

He has recovered from the physical injuries but suffers ringing in his ears because of the damage to his head. Unite Legal Services represented him throughout his compensation claim.

"The pain was so bad it even made breathing difficult, to the point that I couldn't do anything when I was off work," he continued. "The ringing in my ears also affected my sleep and, while it's improved, it's still there. The whole ordeal has been really frustrating.

"Unite Legal Services was great. It challenged my employer and secured compensation for me. There's no way I would have been able to do that on my own, and their help was invaluable." Karen Reay, North East, Yorkshire and

Humberside regional secretary at Unite the Union, said: "Head injuries can have serious and life-changing implications. While our member's rib injuries are thankfully resolved, his head injury has resulted in potentially permanent damage to his hearing.

"Being knocked unconscious is a scary and frightening experience that no one should have to suffer, especially when they are simply trying to get on with their work. His employer should have given him more room to do his job safely – had that been the case, he may never have tripped and wouldn't have been left with the painful injuries he suffered, and continues to suffer from."

Unite Prepaid Plus have just launched a new App where cardholders can check their prepaid card balance and cashback on the go, review their transactions and much more. The first phase is to launch with an iPhone App, with the android version to follow later.

And that's not all – prepaid cardholders can now pay for purchases via Apple Pay, which is an easier and safer way to pay in shops, in Apps and online using an iPhone, Apple Watch, iPad or Mac.

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*Models shown are Corsa Energy and Corsa Limited Edition. Offer subject to availability, on selected models at participating and qualifying Retailers only. Conditional Sale. Finance subject to status. †S&Cs apply. Applicants must be 18+. Finance by Vauxhall Finance. CFIS 7YI. 24-60 month term. Offer applies to Vauxhall Partners only. Offer available on orders or registrations between 19 December 2017 and 2 April 2018. ‡Saving is against Vauxhall On-the-Road cash Price (RRP) of vehicle. ††For Partners Terms, Conditions and Exclusions go to www.partnersprogramme.co.uk/terms-and-conditions. †††First year insurance offer available on Corsa Energy and Limited models only. While stocks last. All drivers must have held a valid full UK or EU licence for a minimum of 1 year. All policies are underwritten by Ageas Insurance Ltd. Other insurance-specific Terms and Conditions apply. The offer will cover the full premium for drivers aged between 21-75 (motor policy only). Only available through Vauxhall Insurance Services. Offers available on orders or registrations between 9 January and 31 March 2018. At participating retailers only. †††Fuel consumption information is official government environmental data, tested in accordance with the relevant EU directive. Official EU regulated test data is provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors. Vauxhall Motors Limited reserves the right to change, amend or withdraw this offer at any point in time. Correct at time of going to press 9/2/2018.

UNDERMINED



On 28th November 2017 Unite and the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign (OTJC) co hosted a performance of Danny Mellor's Undermined in the Durham Miners Hall. Mick Simpson, Unite learning organiser, who helped organise the event said "As well as fundraising, this was as much about raising awareness of the work of the campaign lobbying the Home Secretary to reverse her decision not to hold a full public inquiry into the events at Orgreave Coke Works in June 1984".

Although a raw November night, over 100 people witnessed a brilliant show opened by Alan Cummings, Secretary of the Durham Miners' Association whilst Chris Peace, an OTJC activist, spoke in detail about how the Campaign had started and progress to date.

Mick added "I want to thank Danny and his director, Ben Butcher for coming to the North East, the Durham Miners' Asso-

ciation for the use of the iconic Council Chamber at Red Hill and The Friends of Durham Gala for their backing. I'm extremely grateful to the NEYH Regional Committee for their financial support and the following Unite branches for their generous donations:

- NE/GEO/29 Durham Geographical Branch
- NE/GEO/2 Yorkshire and Humber Metals Branch
- NE/407/6 Durham County Council Branch
- NE/999/7 South Yorkshire Retired Members Branch

- NE/GEO/18 Peterlee Area Geographical Branch
- NE/200/5 Plaxton Branch
- NE/300/34 RTC (Car Transporters) Sectoral Branch
- NE/410/6 Newcastle University Branch
- NE/203/5 Tyneside – Electrical, Engineering & Electronic Sectoral Branch
- NE/404/19 Hartlepool Construction Branch
- NE/GEO/22 Huddersfield Geographic Branch
- NE/GEO/1 Sheffield East Geographical Branch
- NE/UC170 UCATT Rotherham Branch

The feedback from the event has been incredibly positive and everyone's participation contributed to the overwhelming success that has ensured significant funds for the Campaign to continue the fight for justice".

Find out more about the Orgreave Truth and Justice campaign here -

www.otjc.org.uk



20 YEARS ON...

UNITE THE UNION BAND

Incredibly, it is now 20 years since Stocksbridge Band, now Unite the union band appeared in the making of hit film "The Full Monty", a movie that turned brassbanders into film stars!

The initial tracks on this CD feature music from the movie including Hot Stuff, Flashdance and of course The Stripper!

In addition, songs by Sheffield musicians Joe Cocker, Tony Christie and The Human League are present in this exciting, varied and eclectic mix, joined by some original compositions from the Sheffield Branch of the Salvation Army giving a uniquely original take on the diversity of the Sheffield music scene across the ages.

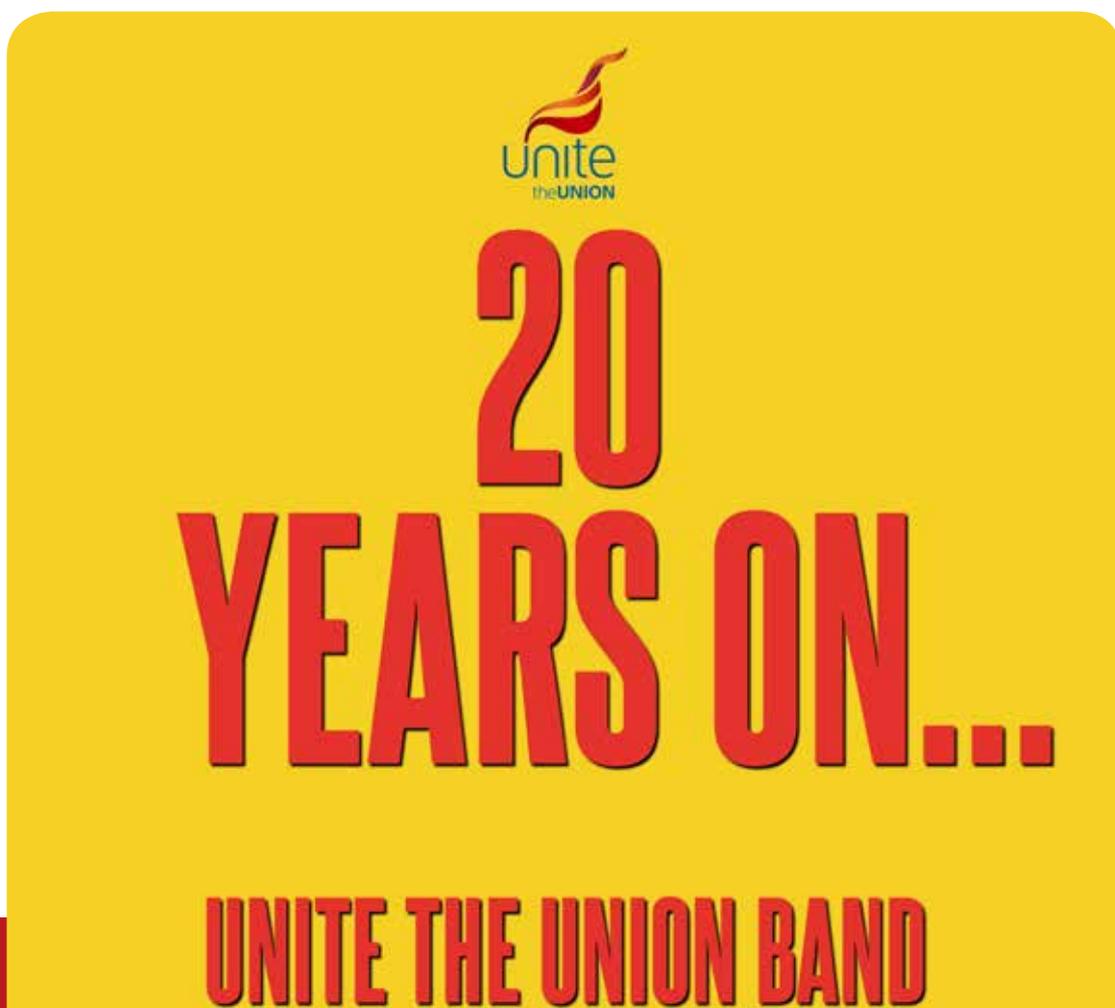
To complete the picture a nod is given to Sheffield's own Sean Bean in his role as the swashbuckling Sharpe!

Later tracks hail from further afield around Yorkshire with 'Scarborough Fair', 'On Ilkla Moor' and Goff Richard's original work 'A Yorkshire Fantasy'.

This new recording pays homage to the band's local musical heritage and to many of the writers and performers from "Gods own County".

We hope you enjoy listening to our music as much as the band enjoyed making it.

Available to download on itunes (Unite the Union Band) or via email the band directly to buy your copy mail@uniteunionbrassband.org.uk



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T: 01642 242 314

NEWCASTLE OFFICE
JOHN DOBSON STREET
NEWCASTLE
NE1 8TW

T: 0191 300 2107

SHEFFIELD OFFICE
SOVEREIGN COURT
300 BARROW ROAD
S9 1JQ

T: 0114 321 0702

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CONTACT THE EDITOR – NEYHPRINT@UNITETHEUNION.ORG