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Siren

Autumn 2004



**Women
ask for what
you want and be
prepared to
get it**

National Women's Committee

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EDITORIAL

Congratulations to all who fought for and won the 2003 pay agreement. It has been a long and arduous two years

So here we are, September 2004. Having narrowly avoided the second bout of National Strikes over pay (same agreement, different day!), we have our 7.7% pay backdated, a pay formula improved and intact, the Grey Book is nearing conclusion, all bar a few outstanding points. And the world is peaceful once again ... or is it?

Apparently, a new dawn is before us (again!) and our employers are looking for a 'positive, joint approach to industrial relations' and so are the FBU. I still just can't help but feel that we're speaking different languages ...

OUR future is Brigade Control Rooms ... the same numbers as present

THEIR future is regions ... and not many

OUR future is a first class fire service, serving the public

THEIRS is the shiny new IRMP cutting services to the quick

OURS is a pension scheme funded for the many

THEIRS is one frozen, solely for the few ...

And the list goes on

They've lost the 'smash' we need to make sure they don't win the 'grab'.

There is still much work to be done comrades, but together we can achieve our aims.

Unity is strength.

Vicky Knight



What more do they want? Enough is enough.

As you read this, things have overtaken us. I wrote this in the middle of yet another ballot to put on paper how I felt at that time

14 AUGUST 2004

I have lost count of how many ballots we have had in London over recent years, but I am sure of one thing and I can tell you this, from the local ballot we held and won in London on co-responding, to the national ballot we are taking part in now, all have the same importance ... ***it is my choice and my right as a member of a trade union.***

It is because of our union that I have that right and I do not want that taken away from me. I will fight to the end for my rights and to be able to have a say in our union. It is essential for the future of our union and for our service to the general public, that the result for this ballot is a YES.

Lots of people ask me "what's this ballot for now?" Most are fully aware of emergency resolution 15 proposed by Nottinghamshire at this years reconvened Annual Conference in Southport. In brief, the Emergency Resolution called for a ballot for discontinuous strike action, if stage 2 and stage 3 pay increases had not been met in full by the 30th July 2004.

The Ballot didn't start until after the 2nd August. Once again the FBU were being flexible by giving the Employers more time. Let's not forget how flexible and patient the FBU and its members have been up to now.

Stage 2 of the pay agreement was 7% due in November 2003. FBU members took part in a ballot to determine whether they accepted or rejected the Employers proposal of the 7% being split, 3.5% now and 3.5% later. The members voted to

accept this proposal and the second part of this payment is now more than eight months overdue.

It has been reported to the Members by the Executive Council that all the work has been completed for stage 3 and that the Audit Commission's verification is not a barrier to the release of the payment. However; the Employers state that they want more time to digest the verification that the Audit Commission has completed.

What nonsense. We see yet again the Employers trying anything to delay and scupper paying us what they owe and in fact honour what they promised in a signed pay agreement.

The Employers are obviously nervous about the ballot and it has become clear to me that they will try anything to stop us voting YES. One area they are pushing in London is so bad I don't know whether to laugh or cry about it.

Apparently, if we go on strike for 4/5 days we will lose all the money that we are owed, so we will not gain anything (only the continuity of conditions that were never on the table for discussion!). When will they realise that it isn't just about the money. I will not be bullied and pushed to one side like I don't matter.

I work in the Fire Service and I am an FBU member. We are one and the same. I think the Employers do not realise (or choose to forget) that when they attack the Fire Brigades Union they are attacking the very same people who make the Fire Service the best performing public service, in the words of their own watchdog, the Audit Commission.

This attempt to get me to vote NO has actually made me more determined to vote YES. It has shown me what little I have gained from the pay agreement so far and at what cost to the service.

I have personally lost my long service

payment if I go for promotion now and if I don't go for promotion I am going to lose it anyway over a period of time. Under IPDS role maps, I will be doing the rank/role above my own for no extra payment (acting up allowance).

This latest attempt to introduce new issues at the last minute makes me realise that I don't think this will be the end to the employers' demands. What else have I got to give up over time? My pension! The shift that is family friendly! Remember 'Smash and Grab' well it appears it's manifested itself again under the guise of the 2003 pay agreement!

To be truthful a ballot is the last thing I wanted, but we have been more than fair in trying to reach an agreement and have been left with no alternative but to ballot. The employers have abused us for too long.

When I go over the facts with London women members about what happened at the meeting between the FBU and the Employers at the National Joint Council on Monday 2nd August, their angry response about the way they have been treated is no surprise to me.

During the two and a half weeks up until the full NJC meeting on the 2nd August, there was over 110 hours of negotiations in which both sides had reached a provisional agreement. Both parties had worked together and were ready to move on. At the full NJC meeting 7 people from the employer's side turned up to vote, most of these people had never been to a Fire Service NJC meeting before.

Did they know what they were voting on? Did they understand the issues? Or were they told how to vote? Christina Jebb who was the Chair of the Employers side before she was sacked, stated in an interview on BBC World at One "My disappointment at the people that had been sent along was that

CONTINUED OVER PAGE

PREGNANCY

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

because they hadn't been part of the negotiations previously it wasn't really possible to be sure that everybody fully understood the import of the action that was taken"

I have been to many meetings and would find it very hard to vote on an issue if I did not know the full history. I am aware of the shameless behaviour of these employers and their political manipulation at the meeting.

We do not know what further demands they may now raise and when if at all we will get our money. I hope we get a YES vote, as this is vitally important for us as individual members and our union as a whole. We must stop continually backing off; the employers have abused our goodwill for long enough.

I am angry because I have been lied to; lied to about the Employers intentions to "modernise" the fire service when they should have called it "smashing and destroying the British Fire Service" One Tory politician openly stated on a BBC news report last week, 'this government have stated quite openly that this is now about finishing the Fire Brigades Union'.

Good spending of public funds or malfeasance? The latter I think. Like other members in London I know it is time to put the resolution into action and when the ballot result is YES then I am prepared to take the action that I voted YES for.

27 AUGUST 2004

AS this goes to print we now know that the Employers have finally reached an agreement with the FBU and they are paying us the money that we are owed.

I know that the outcome on the 26th August 2004 is due to FBU members being united, determined and standing together to tell the employers 'ENOUGH IS ENOUGH'.

I don't however think that the Employers will leave us alone now. What about the replacement for LSI, IPDS, their plans for IRMP and the pensions.

I know that it is even more important now than ever to be united and strong to defend the attacks that will be coming.

Sally Harper
London Women's Representative

Pregnancy in the Fire Service

Sam Rye, Region 3 women's representative, says some Brigades would like to put pregnant employees out of sight and mind



WHEN I joined the fire service at the tender age of 18 years, children were never something I gave a lot of thought to. However when I eventually settled down the time seemed right to have a child.

It was what I thought to be a natural progression. As a woman I believed it to be my right, a natural occurrence and wonderful achievement to become pregnant. Not in the eyes of the British Fire Service though!

Although women have served in the fire service for many years it seemed that even at the time I announced I was first pregnant it all seemed a bit of a shock to my employers! What were they going to do with me!

I think a dark cupboard away from prying eyes might have been their preferred choice, but with some hard work from a National Women's Committee union rep we eventually got the matter sorted out. I have since moved Brigades and decided that I would like to have another child and, believe it or not, I am now on my third.

Wow! I must be a glutton for punishment. It's not that I don't want to be pregnant for the third time but my employers certainly don't want me to be!

I have decided that none short of a rugby team is going to be enough for me now as I want to see my employers get it right without all the fuss. I mean, anybody would think that I had been impregnated

by an alien from outer space.

I don't want any of you to be put off having a baby! Go for it, literally! And there are some Brigades out there that are making an effort to make being pregnant in the fire service not such a commotion!

But not nearly enough is being done. These things, of course, cost money to put in place (not nearly as much as you might think)! Does encouraging women to join the Fire Service, and stay, fit into our employers' perception of modernisation! Well of course we know the answer to that!

If any of you out there are pregnant, contemplating becoming pregnant or are on maternity leave and feel you have been treated without the dignity and respect that you deserve please don't suffer in silence. Contact your National Women's Committee rep for your region.

■ If your region does not have a rep then contact either the NWC secretary or chair. We are all a friendly bunch and all details are dealt with in confidence.

The National Women's Committee is constantly striving to improve Brigades maternity policies!

■ Below are a few telephone numbers that may be of some help to you either now or in the future.

British Pregnancy Advisory Head Office
01564 793225

Maternity Alliance 020 7588 8582

National Childbirth Trust 0870 4448707

Association of Breastfeeding Mothers
020 7813 1481

Miscarriage Association
01924 200 799

Association for Postnatal Illness
020 7386 0868

Stillbirth and Neonatal Society
020 7436 5881

CONTROLS CAMPAIGN

Regional control rooms: What are my choices?

SO ... The Government wants to reduce the 49 brigade control rooms to nine regional ones in the next few years ...
... why?

Nowhere in the regionalisation proposals is there any mention of an improved service to the public or safer working practices for our fire fighters.

We are already the best performing public service so why do they want to change it all?

No doubt we are all asking the same questions, even though we know the answers: SAVING MONEY and REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS.

If these nine regional controls go ahead I have two options:

Stay in the job or leave

STAY IN THE JOB:

- I'll have to move hundreds of miles to a new Control Room.
- I'll have to leave my family
- I'll have to leave my friends
- My children will have to be taken out of school and leave all their friends
- I'll have to find a new NHS Dentist!
- Sell my home and find a new one
- Fight amongst the other control staff for a job, they can't employ us all after all
- My partner will have to find a new job

LEAVE THE JOB:

- What am I qualified to do? ... I have no transferable skills. In fact I'd struggle to get an interview for a clerical assistant in another workplace.
- My redundancy package will probably

be the basic county council package which is one week's pay for every year worked up to a maximum of 10 years. Work that out and it comes to about £9,000.

- After 15 years being institutionalised I will have to get my head around this new way of life ... temporary

“ The Government's proposal for massive job losses in Emergency Fire Control is in direct conflict with their call for greater equality in the Fire Service. To take a position which on the one hand calls for more women working within the service and then on the other hand to attempt to force the removal of hundreds of jobs which are mainly women workers is contradictory, nonsensical and malicious. **”**

Kerry Baigent
NWC Secretary



Stats

Officers' rotas and leave records

BA repair requests

Fire safety advice

Crew Deficiencies

They say these new control rooms are going to be terrorist proof, with security check points, reinforced building materials etc.

I've never been a terrorist target ... but I will be!

... And meanwhile what's happening to me while I make the biggest decision of my life?

AT WORK

- No promotions prospects
- Low moral
- No motivation
- Doom and gloom
- Staff leaving
- Emotional blackmail
- Working at minimum levels
- Increased stress
- Increased sickness

AT HOME

- Unsettled future
- Sleepless nights
- Family tension

Which choice would you make?

After investing so much training in me I still can't quite believe that I'm going to be thrown on the scrap heap.

Oh well ... Never say never, chin up and all that, eh?

An Emergency Fire Control Operator

■ For more information about the campaign against regional control rooms and what you can do to help the campaign please visit www.controlcare.org.uk

contracts,
no pensions, always being the newbie in the office etc ...

- My partner will have to find a better paid job

Well ... That's the personal dilemma covered. But what about the valuable work I do? The contributions I make to the Fire Service?

- Fire calls are only a small percentage of my job
- Who will be left to do:
 - Fire Reports
 - Accident reports
 - Vehicle defects
 - Near Misses
 - Crewing levels

NATIONAL WOMEN'S SCHOOL 2004



'I wish we cou



Rosie Tully, Gloucestershire Membership Secretary, recalls a weekend that delighted even her six-year-old

ON a freezing weekend in February I attended the National Women's School at Wortley Hall, Sheffield. This was the first time I'd been back to Wortley in over eight years and had never been to a Women's School before.

So I'll be honest, on the drive up, with sleeting rain hitting the windscreen and one grumpy child in the back seat, I was starting to ask myself "Why am I doing this?". The feeling of dread was really taking hold as I pulled into the driveway of the Hall. We carried on round the corner and wow! It was beautiful, the sun was now out and the snow had settled. My mood was starting to lift – just a little.

We trudged in to be met by warm smiles, coffee and hugs and I'd only known one person! My miserable six-year-old was suddenly a different child excitement oozing out of him.

He had spotted the crèche, which was full of children of all ages with games, toys and music enticing him in. I must say having been in the Fire Service for 13 years it felt strange being surrounded by women.

I've never felt isolated but certainly in my union work over the years I'd always been the only female and had just accepted this. I found it amazing to be around so many like-minded, friendly and outgoing women and before long I'd even remembered some names!

The weekend was to incorporate workshops of your choice (mine being The women's movement and Sylvia Pankhurst) and several guest speakers.

Over the next few days we heard from the Asylum Seeker/Refugee Centre near Sheffield,

Abortion Rights, Domestic Violence Forum of Sheffield, Sister Trade Unionists from Colombia and also a presentation from B&EMM.

These talks ranged from fun and informative to harrowing and soul searching.

Each session held a Q & A forum and this in turn led to lengthy debates. The speeches of two women from Colombia touched everyone, their bravery shone out to us all and their stories gave us a sharp reminder that there is still much work to be done around the world not just for women but for ALL worker's rights. They received a standing ovation and a collection was made to take back with them to carry on the fight for justice in Colombia.

The School drew to a hasty close as unfortunately we just ran out of time. Hurried goodbyes were said and contact lists made as we all trundled off to different parts of the country. On the way home, I asked my boy if he'd had a good time.

He thought for a while then finally said: "I wish we could live there, it's the best place in the whole world!" He then fell into tears and promptly went to sleep...sign of a good weekend I think!

Looking back it was certainly the most interesting school I'd ever been too, with the added bonus of a couple of good evenings thrown in as well.

I'll definitely be going again and would recommend it to anyone whether you're a union activist or not, as to me the balance was just right. Although next year won't be as stress free for me – he's only gone and told his little sister.

ould live here!'

SYLVIA PANKHURST STATUE

Voices raised for Sylvia

THE fight for our chosen site for the memorial to Sylvia Pankhurst opposite the Palace of Westminster on College Green goes on!

"Sylvia Pankhurst had no connection with the Lords which could justify such a prominent site" House of Lords Administration and Works Committee

"If Pankhurst can't have a statue on College Green, why not take up the spirit of the suffragettes and chain one to the railings outside parliament?" Baroness Betty Boothroyd

The Sylvia Pankhurst Memorial Committee won planning permission for the site from Westminster Council, but because the land is owned by Parliament, permission has to be gained from committees in both the Commons and the Lords. Last year the Lords Committee refused us permission, but then the Commons Committee approved our request and referred the matter back to the Lords. They refused again.

This has meant that for the last months our total focus has been on changing the minds of the Lords Committee. In March, both Houses put on International Women's Day debates – and from those it's clear what the women think!

In the Commons, Vera Baird MP (Lab., Redcar) called on all Members to lobby for the site, and Cheryl Gillan MP (Con., Chesham and Amersham) said "it's about time that Sylvia Pankhurst was recognised. It is appalling that we have hit the buffers on this issue, so if there is any cross-party action that I can take with my sisters – I cannot believe that I said that – on the other side of the House, I am willing to join in, in the spirit of us against the rest of them..."

In the Lords Baroness Brenda Dean commented: "I am ashamed to say that the Committee has refused to agree". She was supported by Baroness Scotland who said: "Sylvia Pankhurst was one of the most prominent suffragettes and clearly deserves this recognition, which is long overdue."

One of the comments made by Vera Baird was that the House of Lords Committee had claimed that the statue

doesn't have artistic merit. This led to a great initiative by Brenda Dean who organised (just before Parliament rose for the summer recess) a viewing of the maquette (an early model for the statue) in the House of Lords.

This was a very successful and encouraging afternoon. Visiting peers had the opportunity not only to see the bronze maquette but also to discuss the project with Barbara Switzer from the Sylvia Pankhurst Memorial Committee and



Professor Richard Pankhurst with the maquette of his mother's statue

Ian Walters, the statue's sculptor. A diverse range of peers attended and the comments book reflects our view of the statue – "lovely and fitting", "superb, permission should be granted", "great, must be on College Green", "powerful and well worth a place on College Green".

When parliament returns Brenda Dean and her colleagues will be assessing the situation and we will decide the next move. However, have no doubt – we will win!

Megan Dobney

Sylvia Pankhurst Memorial Committee

NOT JUST ABOUT THE VOTE

Sylvia Pankhurst's entire adult life was devoted to the cause of improving the lot of working people. Initially this was manifest in the campaign she led for the vote in the East End of London.

She was aware that the Women's Social and Political Union had become a predominantly middle class organisation and that

its hostility to the Labour Party was deeply resented in working class areas.

The rift between herself and the WSPU, the organisation controlled by her better known mother and elder sister, widened as a result of Sylvia's steadfast opposition to World War One during which, alone of all the women's suffrage organisations, her East London Federation maintained the fight for the vote.

After the vote was won, Sylvia maintained her fight for working women by taking up issues such as maternity pay and equal pay and by campaigning for improved child bearing and rearing facilities. When Mussolini's army invaded Ethiopia, she dedicated herself for the next 20 years to work for that country's liberation.

She campaigned tirelessly before and during World War II for an allied victory and was active in lending practical assistance to Jewish refugees fleeing from fascist persecution.

FAMILY CAMPAIGN

Professor Richard Pankhurst, Sylvia's son and patron of the Sylvia Pankhurst Memorial Committee, has been awarded the OBE "for services to Ethiopian studies". He has written to the Queen urging the return to Ethiopia of six Ethiopian manuscripts looted by British troops from Emperor Theodore's fortress of Magdala in Ethiopia in 1868. They are currently held in the Royal Library in Windsor Castle.

MEMORIAL LECTURE

The second SPML will take place on Friday 17 September 2004, 7-8.30pm at Wortley Hall near Sheffield. Richard Pankhurst, Professor of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, will speak on "Sylvia Pankhurst – Abyssinia and Spain". The lecture is sponsored by the National Assembly of Women, the Sylvia Pankhurst Memorial Committee, and Wortley Hall, and will be followed by light refreshments.

New organisation will campaign for choice

IN 2003 the National Abortion Campaign and the Abortion Law Reform Association came together to form a new pro-choice campaigning organisation. Abortion Rights (AR) is a dynamic organisation that aims to secure changes in law and practice to ensure that women in the UK have equal access to safe, legal, and free abortion on request.

AR also aims to improve the quality of women's experience of abortion. In order to work towards these aims more effectively, and counteract anti-choice propaganda that could threaten the 1967 Abortion Act as it currently stands, we need the support of trade unions.

Recent events have ignited fierce debates on the abortion issue. Professor Stuart Campbell's ultrasound scans, showing pictures of a 12 week-old foetus 'walking in the womb', has led to furore in the media over abortions carried out at 12 weeks and beyond. There has also been controversy over the fact that a tiny minority of foetuses have been able to survive outside the womb at 22 weeks, though most of them were born with serious health problems.

Prime Minister Tony Blair recently suggested that the time limit on abortions might have to be reviewed in the light of whether new research proves foetal viability before the current time limit of 24 weeks.

However, fewer than 2% of abortions take place after 20 weeks, and Abortion Rights firmly believes that a woman's right to choose should not be restricted any more than it already is.

A woman does not take the decision to have a late abortion lightly, and abortion providers confirm that late abortions tend to be requested due to a traumatic change

in the woman's life, or the discovery of foetal abnormality.

We believe that it should be up to the woman to decide what she can and cannot cope with. No woman should be forced against her will to have a child.

Abortion Rights is also campaigning for a change in the law to allow abortion on request up to 14 weeks into pregnancy, and the requirement for only one doctor's signature for abortions carried out after this stage. Britain has one of the most restrictive abortion laws in Europe, where most countries allow abortion on request for the first trimester.

Under the current law, abortion is illegal without the signature of two doctors, and

Labour movement organisations defend a woman's right to choose because they know it is poorer women who suffer most when abortion is illegal

the legally accepted grounds for abortion are restrictive because they are purely health-related. A woman's mental or physical health, the health of the foetus, or the health of her existing children has to be threatened by the pregnancy in order for abortion to be allowed.

These grounds clearly do not take into account the fact that women have chosen abortion for a variety of social and personal reasons throughout history.

Even in cases of rape, women have no automatic right to an abortion. Doctors

are entrusted with the decision to whether an abortion should be carried out rather than the woman who has to deal with the consequences of pregnancy.

Additionally, women may also have to negotiate hurdles placed in their way by anti-choice GPs and wait up to eight weeks for an abortion on the NHS.

Abortion services provided by the NHS have improved in recent years, but it is still the case that more than a quarter of English Primary Care Trusts make women wait for more than 28 days. The national target set by government for all PCTs is 21 days, which is achieved by just over half of PCTs in England.

Most trade unions in Britain have policies supporting the 1967 Abortion Act, and many go beyond this by supporting abortion on request.

Labour movement organisations defend a woman's right to choose because they know it is poorer women who suffer most when abortion is illegal, and that until women are free to control their fertility they cannot gain social, economic or political equality with men.

However, having a good policy is not enough. Abortion Rights relies almost entirely upon subscriptions and donations from its members, and without this support the voice of the pro-choice majority is left weaker, leaving the door open for attacks on a woman's right to choose.

We urge trade unions, on a national, regional and branch level, to join the campaign, and become an active part of the struggle for a woman's right to choose.

■ For more information, call Abortion Rights on 020 7278 5539 or look up our website on www.abortionrights.org.uk

BRITISH NATIONAL PARTY

Women and unions crucial in exposing the real BNP

THERE appears to be much controversy over the BNP lately and with so many headlines and column inches devoted to the why's and how's of this supposed political group I got to thinking ... why? who does it benefit? ... and how?

It appears to suit the media, and political organisations like the BNP, to concentrate on and sensationalise certain issues. Recently, for example, the issue of asylum has been quite prolific.

It is used as a smokescreen to hide the broader political and social agendas of bigotry, racism and fascism. It has also caused a welcome diversion from the real human rights issues and politics facing us today and of course, controversy sells newspapers.

I think the role of women in this debate is crucial. Trade union women are well placed to expose the real agenda of the BNP.

As mothers, workers, carers, low wage earners and often the recipients of unequal treatment ourselves, we are armed to recognise, organise and combat these forces of evil.

Those forces, if they were in power, would in fact take any measures to oppress women. But they would happily court our vote under manifesto promises of reaping huge benefits to us, our families and our country. Even using us as the 'moderate' faces, knocking 'door to door' assuring the electorate that the BNP is the way to go to benefit our country and our future.

Also, why is it that a large number of BNP councillors have publicly and spectacularly ditched the party after learning the real truth about its fascist roots?

A highly publicised example of this was BNP Councillor Maureen Stowe of Burnley, who was elected in 2003. Councillor Stowe claims she didn't know the real nature of



Vicky Knight, EC member for women, looks at the the British National Party's policies and finds nothing to benefit women or anyone else she knows

BNP policies when she was elected but now stands as an Independent and brands the BNP as 'a disgrace'.

I spent an hour or two researching the BNP and its policies. I couldn't seem to find one issue, programme or policy that could vaguely benefit my life or the lives of anyone around me.

It was a step back in time, I had entered a Dickensian novel. White is pure. Straight is pure. Men who are straight and white are particularly pure ... you can see the theme! Sexist, racist, homophobic, xenophobic and any other negative label you could think to attach.

Nothing positive and dynamic on the issues of health and welfare, housing or education, war and the international issues facing us today and in the future. Nothing highlighting fiscal policy, tax, violence, public services or in fact anything

vaguely political. The double standards amidst the ignorance of this organisation are unbelievable to say the least.

Here's a taster of the cutting edge thoughts and issues facing the BNP today: They promise to reinstate capital punishment for 'premeditated' murder. They wish to 'resettle' any minority ethnic people in Britain back to their homelands, regardless of whether those same minority ethnic people are British or not.

They wish to cancel the Good Friday agreement and the Anglo-Irish agreement, declaring all Ireland British (bearing in mind their previous policies on the issue of other people doing the same to them!).

According to the BNP, abortion is nothing short of nationwide profit-driven baby killing, except in certain circumstances where then it becomes totally acceptable, for example if there is a possibility of a disability of the child. Why?

Steve Biko once said: 'The most potent thing in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed'. This saying sums up the brainwashing and sectarian tactics used by organisations like the BNP.

It proves that by asking questions and looking beyond what is given to us as fact and seeking what is truth, every single one of us can make informed choices and make a positive difference without someone's 'spin' which after all, is only trying to make us think one thing when the fact is quite clearly another.

Who can racism, sexism or homophobia benefit in our society? Certainly not the electorate when 23% of us are gay, 51% of us are women and the ethnic minority population is growing by the day but is currently 5 million or 8%.

All it does is prey on every one of our 'isms' and ensures that by division we are all ruled.



NATIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

MISSION STATEMENT

The National Women's Committee of the Fire Brigades Union is an elected group of women members, seeking to:

- ★ Identify, resolve and promote all issues affecting women in the Fire Service
- ★ Progress equality and diversity issues in the workplace
- ★ Actively promote and support the FBU's policy of eradicating bullying and harassment in the workplace
- ★ Create and promote a supportive network for women FBU members
- ★ Provide and promote education opportunities for women in the FBU
- ★ Encourage women's participation in mainstream FBU issues
- ★ Through effective involvement in the Trade Union Movement, equalise opportunities and improve conditions for all women workers
- ★ Assist and advise other organisations with common goals and aims
- ★ Advance and pursue international issues

Contact us

www.nwcfbu.co.uk

nwc@fbu.org.uk

Vicky Knight EC member for women

Kerry Baigent National Women's Secretary

Dona Feltham National Women's Chair

The National Women's School 2005

National Women's School 8th to 10th April 2005



Wortley Hall

- The Women's committee was set up by the FBU to identify and progress issues affecting women in the British Fire Service. The committee is made up of serving women members of the FBU.
- You do not need to have any active union experience to attend the school, we welcome everyone's contribution.
- The event is held at Wortley Hall, Wortley, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S35 7DB, England. Travelling expenses will be covered.
- Accommodation and meals are provided for you.
- The crèche facility is excellent.
- The weekend is a mixture of education, sharing of information and experience, meeting new people and finding out what the FBU can do for you.

*Put the date in your diary now
and apply for Trade Union Leave*