

Dispute Update

**COMMUNICATION
WORKERS UNION**

SUPPORT FUND

An unofficial 'Defence' Support Fund has been established by activists and Members in support of the Witney & Carterton Strikers.

Collections will be made Unit by Unit over the coming days and weeks.

It is important that we show our support to our colleagues as the official dispute progresses.

The Branch is well aware of the importance of maintaining a 'legal' dispute and for this reason we must not jeopardise the official action in any way.

With a massive vote at both delivery offices in favour of a strike, members have already suffered financial difficulty in the number of days lost through action.

The resounding result in favour of action was one of the highest the Branch had ever returned:

**Witney—For: 57 (81.1%)
Against: 7**

**Carterton—For: 27 (96.4%)
Against: 1**

Scurrilous articles in the local media of mail being processed through Oxford Mail Centre and Posties being guilty of "black mail" are simply not true.

The employer has diverted all collections from West Oxfordshire to other areas outside of our Branch boundaries.

Members have voted not to take further action until the end of this month (September) to allow more talks to continue into resolving the dispute.

We hope that colleagues will whole heartedly support the fund and give whatever they can.

**UNITY
is
STRENGTH**

**** WITNEY & CARTERTON AGAINST BULLYING ****

WEST OXFORD WON'T HAVE BULLYING

CWU Members at Witney and Carterton delivery offices took official industrial action over a Thursday, Friday and Monday.

The strike came after a series of separate events at the two workplaces. Carterton staff were sent to Witney to perform deliveries, nine members at Carterton were charged with gross misconduct and subsequently all were given a serious penalty of two years suspended dismissal, for not attending Work Time Learning, and **LISTENING!**

A workplace representative, one of the nine, was moved to Faringdon for returning at the end of his duty with mail. He carried out the correct procedure by informing his manager that he would be unable to complete delivery, prior to leaving the office.

A member with an unfortunate history of stress was marched out of Witney, in front of all his colleagues and without any thought or consideration for his circumstances. This action infuriated his

colleagues, who view the behaviour of management as totally without compassion.

Vending machines were empty and drinking water was not available as temperatures soared to the highest on record. Members who insisted on having a break were threatened with their pay being stopped, and further conduct code charges.

At the same time, bottles of water and gourmet sandwiches was supplied to agency staff.

In the latest attempt by management to bully, the bi-monthly delivery functional meeting of all our CWU representatives has now been cancelled, and the facility time of the Area Rep and the two local Reps has been removed.

This demonstrates real contempt on behalf of the employer. It shows how serious they really are in getting round the table and resolving the dispute, when the main lead negotiator, who had no part in the action, is being penalised.

Further information to Reps and Members will follow as the situation develops.

CUT OFF AGREEMENT

An important part of both disputes was the worker's stance against bullying in the workplace.

Despite some concessions being made, the dispute also centres round management failing to apply or recognize national agreements.

One of the most important issues for any delivery officer is to know what procedure to follow should he or she run out of time.

The national agreement on 'cut off' was put in

place to protect all our members, should the circumstances arise, when they run out of time to deliver the mail.

In past years, the employer has been all too keen to charge our members with delay of the mail—both are serious offences and have led to dismissal in some cases.

The Union will not stand by and see our members face unwarranted discipline charges in light of them following the cor-

rect and agreed procedures.

As a result of the stand made by members at Witney and Carterton, other offices in our area have benefited from the clarification and commitment to abide by the cut off procedure.

It is fair to say that the practice of some managers determining their own judgment of members not having enough time has been put on the back boiler for the time being, and any plans to roll out un-

agreed managerial procedures have been thwarted.

The membership of both units are solid in their defiance that a commitment to all agreements, national and local, should be confirmed by the employer before there can be an adequate and fair resolution to the dispute.

Job and finish should also mean what is say's! The world HAS changed, for sure.