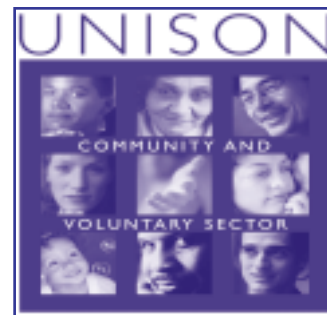


voice @work



newsletter for unison community & voluntary sector members

august 2002

issue no. 1

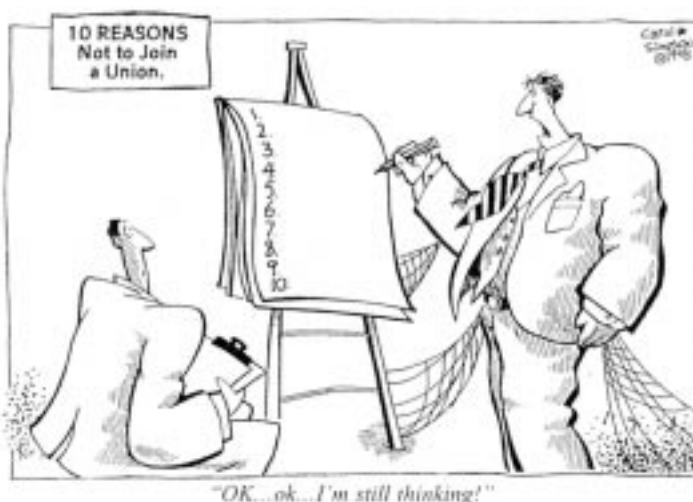
A new beginning ...

Welcome to the first edition of 'Voice@Work' UNISON's new newsletter for our expanding community and voluntary sector membership, within Greater Glasgow and the West of Scotland.

UNISON's membership continues to grow across the sector, and with a larger membership comes issues of communication.

Hopefully 'voice @work' will help you in that communication process!

This newsletter has been produced by fellow voluntary sector workers like you. We would appreciate your views on the first issue, including its content and suggestions for what you would like to see in future issues.



Constructive criticism please!

Any contributions - drawn or written - would, of course, be most welcome. Tell us what's happening in your own workplace (success stories or otherwise), or have your say on any matters and issues that impact upon workers in the community and voluntary sector.

■ Editorial group

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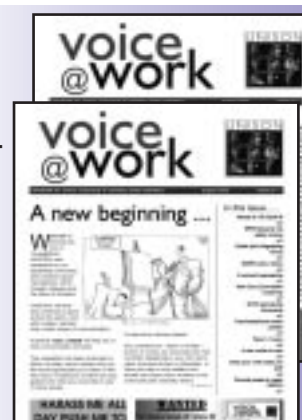
**HARASS ME ALL
DAY PUSH ME TO
THE LIMIT MAKE
ME FEEL LIKE DIRT**

WHO NEEDS A UNION?

WANTED

For future issues of 'voice @work', your views, articles, cartoons, distributors for your workplace etc see page 2 for contact details.

It's your newsletter - so use it!



UNISON - the community & voluntary sector union



is published by
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issue no.1
August 2002

This issue went to
print on:
21st August 2002

Design and
Layout:
Editorial Team

Printed by
Hampden
Advertising Ltd,
73 Robertson St,
Glasgow

The paper used
for the printing of
VOICE@WORK
is made from
pulp sourced
from sustainable
forests.

Thanks to Sean
from Hampden
for his assistance.

The views
expressed in this
newsletter do not
necessarily reflect
the views of the
UNISON
Glasgow Health
Branch or the
Editorial Team.

Around the workplaces

Miracle at 192 Clyde Street Archdiocese JCC meets

The first meeting of the Archdiocese of Glasgow's Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) has finally taken place on 19th June. UNISON was ably represented by Paul Kelly, Steward Barrhead Project, Pat Gunnion, Steward Springbank St project, Carol O'Rourke, Health & Safety rep McNeil St project and Jim Lamb, UNISON Convenor for the voluntary sector division.

Below Paul Kelly reports on the first meeting.

The Committee had its first meeting at Clyde St. After a lot of apprehension it was good to see there could be a frank and open discussion on various subjects, and at last UNISON members have a voice within the Archdiocese of Glasgow at which to raise their concerns. Issues raised and discussed included:

☞ Pay Negotiations:

An ad hoc Committee will be set up to discuss pay. It was agreed that there would be two UNISON representatives (one a local rep) and two Senior Management representatives. The Personnel Director will also provide information on the last five years' pay awards prior to this meeting.

☞ Credit Union:

Robert Rae, UNISON Branch Development Officer had raised the possibility of staff joining the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) Credit Union last year. Sue Jardine, Personnel Director reported that the Archdiocese will circulate information and application forms in August/September. Initially staff will need to save through their bank by direct debit, and hopefully at a later date, be able to save through their salary if they wish.

☞ Staff Breaks and Facilities:

Staff should have a 20-minute break per day. There may be exceptions to this where it is not feasible - this will be checked out and brought back to next meeting.

☞ Working Time Directive:

Relief Workers:

They should not work more than 48hrs per week and if they do may be in breach of their contracts. Checks will be made to see this is carried out, as working time directive covers this.

Sleep Overs:

1-2 a week. Staff should not be doing 4 in an 8 day period or back to back. UNISON have asked for guidelines on this. The issue will be carried forward to the next meeting. If staff are kept awake due to an emergency, and are up all night, project managers should let them away the next day as soon as it is possible.

☞ Funding Cover for Services users on holiday:

There is no Archdiocese policy which states staff who go on holiday only get paid for a sleep over while away. This depends on each project, and the managers discretion. The Archdiocese will also be looking at policies and funding for this. The issue will be discussed in more detail at the ad hoc pay meeting.

☞ Vacancies:

The Archdiocese have promised to speed up the time it takes to fill vacancies, as on average it takes 11 weeks from the day of interviews to references being received. It was brought to the attention of the Archdiocese that adverts for posts and job descriptions should not change at interviews. This should not happen.

☞ UNISON Mail:

It was brought to the attention of the Archdiocese that mail regarding UNISON matters and sent out via Clyde St to projects was not being seen by staff. The Archdiocese stated this should not be happening and would treat this seriously if they find out it is happening. Archdiocese also stated that they were only too happy to send out any material re. UNISON to its projects.

☞ Facility Agreement for Shop Stewards:

Discussion took place for one central area for UNISON to deal with its members' issues, the Archdiocese will look into this and come back with a response.

It was also agreed the next meeting would be held on September 11th - once again at Clyde St - where we hope we will have answers on some of the issues raised at this first meeting.

We will keep all members informed of the outcome of these meetings.

To contact your UNISON reps on the JCC :

Paul Kelly, Barrhead Project
Pat Gunnion, Springbank St
Carol O'Rourke, McNeil St
Jim Lamb, 0141 243 2120



Wanted: UNISON contacts in your workplace

If you don't see any literature in your workplace or here from us, would you be willing to be a mailing contact?

A mailing contact distributes UNISON literature to fellow members, and keeps the branch informed of issues within the workplace.

If you would be interested in finding out more about this or becoming a mailing rep then contact:

Robert Rae ☎0870 777 006 ✉R.Rae@unison.co.uk

SPPA Stewards Win Policies Review

Stewards in the early years charity Scottish Pre-school Play Association (SPPA) have persuaded the organisation's management to undertake a joint management/union review of all company policies and procedures.

The stewards argued that a review was necessary because all the existing policies and procedures were in existence before UNISON had signed a formal recognition agreement with SPPA and were written without union input or agreement.

Already SPPA management have agreed to the stewards' suggested amendments to the health and safety policy to include sections covering homeworking, risk assessment and consultation with union representatives, and to a request that a staff development/training policy is developed in the very near future.

Contact Ian Williamson,
SPPA UNISON steward
0141 221 4148

GAMH policy review

UNISON Stewards on Glasgow Association for Mental Health's Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC), Lorraine Sharp and Cathie Paterson are currently working with management on evaluating all the current policies.

This is as you would appreciate is a huge task, which will take time to progress. Look out for future reports in 'voice@work'. Members will be kept fully informed through their usual channels.

ENABLE Joint Negotiating Group

The JNC (Joint Negotiating Committee) of 7 June proved extremely productive with agreement on certain issues and on the way forward for others.

UNISON Training

A new protocol for time off for trade union training has been agreed. Requests will be made through local managers submitted a minimum of 3 weeks in advance. Request will not be unreasonably withheld. This is an excellent breakthrough as it will ensure everyone is now "playing to the same rules" and will help prevent any of the previous issues over time off recurring.

New Staff Induction

Agreement has been made that when staff induction is taking place, wherever possible, time will be allocated for either a steward or UNISON staff member to present. This will prove to be an extremely useful way of making contact with potential members as ENABLE moves fur-

ther towards supported living where our members are often alienated by their lone working.

Harmonisation

While the Harmonisation Group continues to delve through all the complexities of harmonising conditions of service throughout the organisation, UNISON can advise that as a small taster management have agreed a pay slip notification to assist the great anomaly of rates of pay for contracted staff and sessional workers. While this does not go any way towards addressing anomalies, it is a step in the right direction communication-wise as it shows a management commitment to inform. We trust this is a sign of improved communication on all counts.

UNISON ENABLE JNC reps
Sam Haveron
Tom Findlay
Elaine Findlay

A Woman's Perspective

Why be a shop steward?

When would I get the time?

When would I get time for me?

Questions I still ask myself after 20 years!

About nine years ago, a man (who will remain nameless) said to me: "It's not what you can do for UNISON, it's what UNISON can do for you." At the time I didn't really understand what he meant, but over the years when life jumps up and bites you on the bum, the skills and experiences gained from being an activist at local, regional and national level help me through some times.

..... it's not
what you can
do for UNI-
SON, it's what
UNISON can
do for you!

Mags Dunbar

crashing halt when I discover my eldest son (14) is bunking off school.

Time to prioritise! I had to step back from the majority of union duties and activities.

I continued to represent members and limited my duties at branch level, and as life returned to as normal as it gets in our house, I became more involved again.

So, the point of my wee story is you don't have to be a superwoman to make a difference. Every little bit helps and when the going gets tough you'll be surprised at how well you manage the situation, be it at work or at home, with a calm and confident attitude.

So I repeat, it's not what you can do for UNISON, it's what UNISON can do for you!

Mags Dunbar
Branch Women's Officer



Care commission underway

New Care Commission Underway

Voluntary sector members working in care services will be aware that the new body charged with the regulation of care in Scotland is now up and running.

The Care Commission took over responsibility for the registration and inspection of care services from local authorities and NHS Boards on 1 April.

All care services across the public, private and voluntary sectors are now subject to registration and inspection against a new set of national care standards. The Commission will also investigate complaints made against a care service from a range of sources including users and staff, and will have powers of enforcement to ensure services comply with standards.

UNISON's submission to the Scottish Parliament on the Bill establishing the Commission broadly welcomed the changes, but outlined the union's concerns over the employment implications for the care service workforce.

It was quite right, UNISON agreed, that standards of care provision should be accorded the importance they deserve, but that maintaining and improving standards would "in a

large part depend upon a stable workforce, properly trained, educated and remunerated."

In particular, employers had a real responsibility to address training and education issues, while at the same time UNISON recognised that many care service providers in the voluntary sector would struggle with the financial burden implied.

Now that the new regulatory framework is in place, UNISON will be monitoring any impact the changes are having on its members on the ground.

For our part, 'Voice @ Work' would be interested to hear from any voluntary sector workers employed by care providers. See page 2 for e-mail and mailing address.



maintaining and improving standards would "depend upon a stable workforce, properly trained, educated and remunerated."

UNISON submission to the Scottish parliament Bill on the Care Commission

SCVO Partnership documents

UNISON as part of the Scottish Trade Union Congress (STUC) is a member of the SCVO Partnership Forum. The forum meets to discuss amongst other things best practice for the voluntary sector. Two booklets have been produced by the Partnership Forum as their contribution to this process, *Get a Life!* and *Working Together*.



Get a Life!
Developing work-life balance in the voluntary sector - A guide to legislation and good practice. These guidelines aim to provide voluntary organisations with an overview of current legislation and good practice in this area and guidance on how to go about planning and implementing work-life balance policies. They also highlight the potential benefits and the challenges that such policies present, based on the experiences of organisations that have already gone down this route, and signpost you on to specialist organisations that can give you further information, advice and support.

Working Together
Guidelines on Partnership Working for the Voluntary Sector. These guidelines aim to provide an overview of what partnership at work entails; what it means; the potential benefits to your organisation; the different models that exist; how you can apply it in your organisation; and what support and advice is available to help you do so.



Both of these guidelines are available for downloading on the internet at:

http://www.scvo.org.uk/working_together/guidelines_briefings/index.html

FREE football anti-racist posters for UNISON members

UNISON members can obtain free posters of the following football teams:

Arsenal, Aston Villa, Bolton, Burnley, Celtic, Charlton, Chelsea, Coventry, Everton, Fulham, Hearts, Hibernian, Huddersfield, Ipswich, Leeds, Liverpool, Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Nottingham Forest, Rangers, Sheffield Wednesday, Spurs, Watford and West Ham.

To get a free poster (additional posters require more than one stamp) send a SAE (A4 size) with a first class stamp to:

Show Racism The Red Card, PO Box 141, Whitley Bay, NE26 3YH.
Screensavers for your computer of the above teams are also available at:
www.srrtc.org



Does your work make you sick?

Your job can make you sick.

Every year around two and a half million people are made ill because of their work. Your working conditions can play a very important role in your health.

Often the dangers you face are hidden rather than obvious. Seemingly harmless working conditions can lead, in time, to serious illness.

Yet work itself is not what is making people ill. Bad working practices and poor health and safety procedures are the cause. Almost all work-related illnesses are avoidable, and UNISON is there to help ensure the health and safety of every one of our members.

You don't have to put up with it

Your employer has a legal duty to provide you with a safe workplace, safe working methods and safe equipment. In addition, your employer cannot allow you to work with substances, such as chemicals, that might put your health at risk.

Once you are a UNISON member; if your employer asks you to work in poor working conditions, or with dangerous substances or equipment, UNISON is there to assist.

You have the right to be safe and healthy at work

UNISON Safety Representatives work to ensure that you work in a healthy and safe environment. They have legal rights to help them carry out their duties.

On your behalf they can:

- investigate any problems,
- inspect your workplace,
- raise health and safety issues with your employer,
- get access to information and advice from UNISON.

As a UNISON member you can raise any complaints, queries or worries with your UNISON safety representative.



Unions make workplaces safer

Workplaces with trade union recognition have 50 per cent fewer accidents than those without.

The Health and Safety Executive has shown that trade union representatives are far better informed than managers.

Trade unions help make workplaces safer, and UNISON has a strong record of campaigning on health and safety issues.

With UNISON's commitment to health and safety, employers have no choice but to sit up and take notice.

UNISON produces a range of health and safety materials FREE to members.

Contact the Branch for further information, details on page 2.

USE YOUR RIGHTS

Safety committees

Safety committees with full union involvement make the workplace much safer. However, safety committees are also notorious for being world class talking shops. Give yours a health check to make sure it is doing its job.

Safety policy

All employers are required to have a health and safety policy stating their commitment to health and safety and setting out details of the organisation and arrangements in the business to secure a safe and healthy workplace. Get hold of it, improve it.

Risk assessments

The method that employers must use to ensure a safe and healthy workplace is called "risk assessment" - and it isn't rocket science. Employers must look at jobs done, identify any potential problems and who might be affected, review what they do to prevent injury and act to ensure that nothing goes wrong (Hazards 44). Safety reps must be consulted by employers when they are doing risk assessments.

Accident reporting

Employers are required to have a system for employees to record any accidents, normally called the accident book. Accident and incident statistics give safety reps a good indication of what is going on in the workplace - as long as everyone is reporting them.

The law

Lots of laws deal with health and safety at work, but don't let this put you off. Safety reps should never lose sight of what they think is wrong at the workplace and how they think it should be improved. The law should be considered a tool to help negotiate improvements, and not relied on exclusively to solve the problem. It is rarely enough on its own.

Consultation

Employers must consult with safety reps on all issues that may affect the health, safety and welfare of employees - and they must do it in good time. So telling a rep a new computer system has just arrived is not "consultation in good time". Reps and employees should be involved in any changes at the workplace from the planning stage onwards, through purchase and into implementation.

THE UNION EFFECT

Responsible employers will work with Unions to promptly remedy safety concerns. The workplaces with full union recognition and joint health and safety committees are the safest of all, more than twice as safe as those with no union or committee (Hazards 58). Similar findings have been reported in the US and elsewhere (Hazards 66).

But not all employers are responsible and not all treat your health and welfare with the priority it deserves. Unions sometimes have to make these employers listen.

A 1999 report from the TUC found that health

and safety trailed just behind pay and redundancies as the top reason for industrial action ballots (Hazards 67). And new research says traditional industrial action works.

A London School of Economics discussion paper last year said "strikes and slow-downs serve as efficacious union tools for reducing workplace injuries," concluding: "Even if unions and management quarrel over all the other issues, labour possesses vital, tacit, shopfloor knowledge regarding health and safety, knowledge that is imperative for reducing accidents" (Hazards 73).

Looking for a new start?

You can boost your confidence and get back into learning with UNISON's Return 2 Learn course

RETURN 2 LEARN
R2L
RETURN 2 LEARN

UNISON has developed a successful Return 2 Learn (R2L) programme for our members. We are keen to expand R2L into the community & voluntary sector. Would you be interested? Read on!

What is R2L?

Return 2 Learn is a course that is available to all UNISON members in your area. It is designed for people returning to study so it's easy to join and it's informal and friendly with no tests or exams.

What's in the course?

R2L gets you going by developing your existing skills and giving you new ones. You will find out about the studying, writing, investigating, and dealing with figures. You will also have the opportunity (where available) to learn essential computer skills.

Easy to get on with

R2L is designed for people like you. You'll join a study group that meets every two or three weeks at a time that suits you. There's also one residential weekend.

Support

There's a tutor who runs the group and who can help and advise you and give you feedback. You'll also find that you'll get mutual support from the group.

R2L is free

All you have to find is the time and interest to do it. There are no fees and UNISON pays all your expenses including accommodation and meals on the weekend residential, and travel costs. There is also help with childcare or dependant care costs.



Credits for your work

If you wish you can gain credits for your work which will help you access other courses and workplace training.

Easy to join

R2L is open to all UNISON members - you don't have to be an activist - all you need is the interest. You can join with one or more friends and colleagues - just put their names on the form so we can contact them.

Act now

Don't miss this chance. We would like to establish an R2L course for our community & voluntary sector members. If you are interested in R2L, then get in touch with Barbara Diamond, UNISON R2L Co-ordinator on:

☎ 0870 7777 006 or fillout the tear off slip below and send it FREEPOST.

Return to:

Barbara Diamond, UNISON R2L Co-ordinator
FREEPOST NW486, 14 West Campbell Street, Glasgow G2 6BR

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE:

EMPLOYER:

In the world of work...

Killed for belonging to a union!

Over 200 trade union activists lost their lives last year for standing up for the rights of fellow workers, according to latest figures. In addition, 8,500 were arrested, 3,000 more injured, over 100,000 harassed and nearly 20,000 dismissed because of their trade union activities. The most disturbing rights abuses are claimed to be in Colombia, Guatemala, Venezuela, Costa Rica, China, South Korea, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Belarus and the Gulf States.

Source: www.icftu.org/survey2001

"Management bonding sessions" are hot stuff

You've heard of "management bonding sessions" but a dozen Burger King marketing department workers didn't know what they had let themselves in for in Florida recently. They burned their feet when they had to walk over white hot coals at a "bonding" session. One woman was taken to hospital and Burger King brought in a doctor to treat others whose feet were blistered.

Source: Direct - GPMU magazine

Go Bananas

Human Rights Watch (HRW) is warning of dangerous and exploitative conditions imposed by multinational companies operating in Ecuador's banana sector. The *Tainted Harvest* report shows the banana fields have the worst forms of child labour and appalling occupational health and safety conditions, including the irresponsible use of chemicals and reckless aerial spraying, in some cases directly onto the heads of children working in the fields. HRW is asking for your support to fight abuse by the banana multinationals.

Human Rights Watch, 350 Fifth Ave, 34th Floor, New York

Go to the HRW Ecuador campaign webpage to download the *Tainted Harvest* report and for action guides, including examples of sample letter to send to politicians, the Equadorian government, the banana multinational and to UK supermarkets stocking Dole, Chiquita, Noboa, Favorita and Del Monte bananas:
www.hrw.org/campaigns/ecuador/



Councils poised to reject PPP/PFI

UNISON Scotland's campaign of opposition to Public Private Partnerships (PPP)/Private Finance Initiative (PFI) received a boost recently with the news that two local authorities are ready to abandon the scheme.

Both West Dunbartonshire council and Falkirk council have concluded that there are far too many serious flaws with the scheme to justify any further PPP funded school building and refurbishment projects in their areas.

Speaking in *The Herald*, David Alexander, leader of Falkirk council, neatly summed up the thinking behind his council's decision. He said: "Our flagship five new schools are all run for private profit with the major losers being the pupils, taxpayers and surrounding communities. It is calculated that Falkirk Council will pay £360m over the 25 years of the lease for these schools and at the end of that period the authority won't own as much as a single brick."

UNISON has consistently argued that PPPs are hugely expensive and undemocratic exercises that effectively privatise public services and threaten the pay and conditions of workers transferred from the public to the private sector.

IN BRIEF What is PPP/PFI?

PPP is the umbrella name given to a range of initiatives which involve the private sector in the operation of public services. The most common type of PPP is the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). A typical example of a PFI project is a school financed, built and operated by a private profit making consortia which then 'leases' the buildings and non-teaching staff to the local authority in return for an annual payment. Contracts are at least 25 years long. At the end of each contract, however, the buildings remain in the private sector. Despite a MORI opinion poll showing that 91% of Scottish voters wanted public services run by government or local authorities, PPPs are the Scottish Executive's preferred method of financing many essential public services.

..... and why UNISON Opposes PPP/PFI

- ☞ PPP/PFI privatises public services
- ☞ Profits come before public need
- ☞ PPP/PFI privatises staff, cutting jobs, wages and conditions
- ☞ PPP/PFI substitutes for public investment – it is not an extra. Set up costs can be five times more than public borrowing projects.
- ☞ PPP/PFI hits your pocket. You'll pay more through taxes for tens of years because it is more expensive than public borrowing.

For further information on UNISON Scotland's position on PPP/PFI, visit the web site at: www.unison-scotland.org.uk

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your investments
to chance

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Your RIGHTS at work

Annual leave, working week, health & safety, terms & conditions, unfair dismissal, discrimination, maternity, contract, pay, bullying

You have employment rights even if you have no written contract. These rights are called 'statutory rights'. These are the minimum rights a worker/employee has under the current employment legislation.

If you have a written statement or workplace agreement, they might provide for better conditions than the statutory rights and therefore should be followed.

UNISON has published a guide to 'Your rights at work'* which is available for members.

It covers various issues including:
Annual leave, working week, health & safety, terms & conditions, unfair dismissal, discrimination, maternity, contract, pay, bullying and harassment.

If you would like a copy of the guide our telephone number is on page 2.

*The handbook is a summary of your rights at work and should be used as a guide. It is not a full statement of the law.



IT'S THE LAW

Under new legislation UNISON members are entitled to:

- ☞ the legal right to have their union recognised
- ☞ the right to have their union negotiate best possible terms and conditions on behalf of the members
- ☞ the right to have their union represent them in any individual grievance or disciplinary matter, even if the union is not recognised by the employer
- ☞ Consultation about company training and career development
- ☞ new rights for improved maternity leave and statutory paternity leave
- ☞ take parental leave to care for a child in its early years and
- ☞ take time off work to deal with an emergency involving a dependant.



If you are not already a member of UNISON the largest union in the community & voluntary sector? Joining is easy!

Complete the tear off slip below and send it FREEPOST requesting an application form or alternatively telephone UNISON Direct FREE ☎ 0800 5 97 97 50

Freepost address:

Robert Rae,
UNISON Scotland,
FREEPOST NW486,
14 West Campbell St,
Glasgow G2 6BR

UNISON Direct:
☎0800 5 97 97 50



Beat the rush - write
or telephone today!

Name:
Address:
Postcode:
Telephone:
E-mail:
Employer: