

EQUALITY MATTERS

December 2021



We're almost at the end of another difficult year and will soon welcome in a New Year. Let's hope it's good for all of us.

Stay safe

Stay safe, be strong and continue supporting.

Sonia Stewart
Branch Equalities Officer

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Stay safe

Woman awarded compensation

If you need help, don't keep it to yourself

Over 400,000 people affected each year

Launch of Disability Essentials

Increase in homeless deaths since 2013

Help for employers to be fair with flexible working practices

NEWS

Compensation for Refusal of Flexible Working Request

Compensation of £185,000 was awarded to a woman for indirect sex discrimination after her request for flexible working due to childcare was rejected. She had requested to change her hours of work.

Work Related Stress

Chronic (cumulative) stress can be as a result of more than one combining factor. It can be related to different stress factors from work eg heavy workload and other challenges within the working environment, then being taken into the home.

Earlier this year, the TUC reported “..over 400,000 people suffer from stress related illnesses at work each year, yet stress is not yet recognized as an occupational illness..”

Disability Resources

A Disability Essentials range of resources was launched on 29 November by the Business Disability Forum. The aim is to provide organisations with guidance when they are trying to attract and recruit disabled talent, especially helpful where an organization may be unsure of what to do.

Homeless Deaths

The deaths of homeless people has risen by 42% since 2013. Over 680 died last year (England and Wales) according to the Office for National Statistics, compared to 778 in 2019. The slight reduction was due to emergency accommodation being made available during lockdown.

New Guidelines for Flexible Working

New guidelines for hybrid working is now available to employers to help them to avoid pitfalls when looking at new ways of working, including working policies.

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NEWS

Domestic Abuse

National Strategy

The Government's National Domestic Abuse Strategy is expected to include interventions in relation to perpetrators of domestic abuse being moved out of homes instead of victims being displaced.

Domestic Abuse - December Increase

Women's Aid is urging us to look out for signs of domestic abuse over the Christmas period, as there has already been an increase during December.

The charity is working with local councils on this, especially as during the same period in 2020 over 19% of crimes were related to domestic abuse.

LGBT+ and the working environment

The workplace can be a hostile environment for many LGBT+ workers.

According to Stonewall there is a reluctance from over 35% of LGBT+ people in the UK to share their sexuality at work, for fear of being discriminated against. More support is called for from employers.

Schools: Abuse and Harassment

Calls alleging sexual abuse and harassment in schools have been made to a national helpline, citing complaints including unwanted touching, sexual name-calling, sexual assault and rape.

According to the NSPCC many victims felt they couldn't report the abuse at the time it happened, or they tried but were not listened to.

The NSPCC has a Reporting Abuse in Education helpline for children and adults affected by sexual abuse. Contact 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

Perpetrators to be moved out

Domestic abuse rising during December

LGBT+ workers reluctant to share their sexuality at work

Victims afraid to report or not listened to

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Challenging Sexual Harassment

Note: Sexual harassment doesn't just happen in the workplace

What is Harassment?

The Equality Act 2010

".....There are three types of harassment. The first type, which applies to all the protected characteristics apart from pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership, involves unwanted conduct which is related to a relevant characteristic and has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the complainant or of violating the complainant's dignity.

The second type is sexual harassment which is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature where this has the same purpose or effect as the first type of harassment.

The third type is treating someone less favourably because he or she has either submitted to or rejected sexual harassment, or harassment related to sex or gender reassignment."

What does the Equality and Human Rights Commission say?

"All employers have a duty of care to protect their workers and will be legally liable for sexual harassment in the workplace if they have not taken reasonable steps to prevent it. Our guidance offers a legal explanation and practical examples of how to tackle and respond effectively to harassment.

The "...Trades Union Congress (TUC) research in 2016² found that 52 per cent of women had experienced unwanted behaviour at work, including groping, sexual advances and inappropriate jokes, which rose to 63 per cent for young women aged 16–24.

Similarly, research undertaken by the Young Women's Trust³ found that 1 in 5 young women said they either didn't know how to report sexual harassment, or were too scared to, because of concerns that this might mean losing their job or being given fewer hours.

Their findings also indicated that 1 in 14 young women reported being treated less well in their job, or while looking for work, because they had rejected sexual advances."

Women must be able to feel safe

It's not a joke

It's not banter

Often takes place when there are no witnesses

Women refuse to be silenced

Employers legally liable

Unions must take action



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Challenging Sexual Harassment

#UsToo : “Sexual harassment isn’t just a problem for celebrities. It’s happening in ordinary workplaces everywhere. Join our campaign to make workplaces harassment-free zones. It affects us too.”

What does UNISON say?

UNISON training : UNISON has embarked on a pilot training programme ‘Understanding and challenging sexual harassment’, with Manchester Local Government Branch.

This training is mandatory and the aims include:

- ◆ Gaining an understanding of what constitutes sexual harassment
- ◆ Gaining an awareness of the consequences and impacts of sexual harassment for the individual, others and for an organisation.

“Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted and unwelcome conduct that affects a person’s dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive working environment for them.

Sexual Harassment could be a one off incident or could be a pattern of behaviour perpetrated over time.

Most sexual harassment is perpetrated by men towards women.Sexual harassment is inextricably linked to power. Because men have historically held institutional and personal power, it can just take one man to sexually harass a women or a group of women. Sexual harassment often takes place when there are no witnesses.

If there are no witnesses to the sexual harassment you have received, don’t let this stop you challenging the harassment, either informally or formally.

Sexual harassment if left unchallenged over a period of time, can escalate to more serious issues, which also increases the negative impact on the woman receiving the harassment.”

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Breaking the Silence

We need to talk and we need to be listened to. Sexual harassment and sexual violence is a reality and doesn't just happen in the workplace.

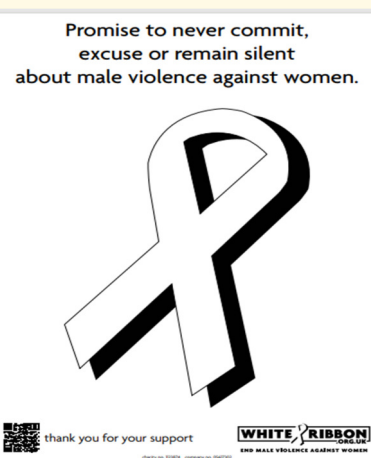
Abusers **must not** be protected. Women should be supported, listened to and not harmed. We won't be silenced. Let's be clear: Manchester Branch Women's SOG will support anyone who has faced or is facing sexual harassment.

#NotAllMen Or #AllMenCan?

Every time sexual violence against women and girls comes to the fore, we are told that it's not all men. Women know that. Women also know that #NotAllMen is meant to shut us up. It's misogynistic, it's harmful, and we reject it. Let's trend the phrase #AllMen and encourage men to also sign up to the White Ribbon Campaign. It's time for men to think about:

- The language they use
- Actions that they see other men take and often ignore
- How to include women without those women being in fear

We want as many men as possible to think carefully and make the White Ribbon Promise to **never commit, excuse or remain silent** about male violence against women.



Women's SOG Contacts:

Lesley Lancelott Email: lesley.lancelott@manchester.gov.uk

Dawn Warriner Email: dawn.warriner@manchester.gov.uk



Thank you for your support in the fight against mysogyny. Let's end violence against women and girls. Together in Unison

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UNISON Inspire Black Members Forum

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Meetings

The Forum continues to meet virtually.



National Black Members Conference

Three members have been elected as delegates to the next National Black Members Conference in January 2022.

Work Programme 2022

Continuing to challenge workplace inequalities, being part of the decision-making process and working collaboratively with others on key issues, particularly:

- ◆ Challenging racism in the workplace
- ◆ Challenging sexual harassment
- ◆ Challenging bullying and harassment
- ◆ Disproportionate number of grievances and disciplinarys
- ◆ Improved diversity on interview panels
- ◆ Improved number of Black senior managers
- ◆ Race Review outcomes
- ◆ Equality Impact Assessments

Communities

Identifying inequalities within communities, promoting equalities work of the Branch and Forum, as well as continuing to build community relationships and support.

Recognition

Recognising and celebrating members' achievements and supporting career aspirations.

Events

Delivering relevant equality related events, which raise awareness of key issues, whether historical or present day.

Inspire Forum Contacts:

Sonia Stewart Email: sonia.stewart1@manchester.gov.uk

Damian Daley Email: damian.daley@manchester.gov.uk

Challenge

Support

Celebrate

Speak Up

Stay Strong

Be Proud

Unity is Strength

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Did You Know?

The Ainu people of Japan are reportedly the original Japanese. Of Ainu ancestry they were Africoid/African descent people who settled in Japan and fought in the war.

Save the Date

December

3
UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities

3-5
National Young Members' Conference, Cardiff

15
Fight for Fairness End of Year Rally webinar

2022

January

21-23
National Black Members Conference
Liverpool (provisional)

February

3
National Higher Education Conference
Newcastle Upon Tyne

17-19
National Women's Conference
Edinburgh

March

8
Health and Safety Seminar
London

EQUALITY MATTERS is also at www.unisonmanchester.org
Deadline for comments and articles to be submitted for the next Issue of this Newsletter is Monday, 20 December 2021. Comments and articles to be emailed to: sonia.stewart1@manchester.gov.uk

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Stay safe

**Send in your
articles**

**Send in your
comments**

**Send in your
good news**

**Don't miss the
deadline**