



# CONNECT

AUTUMN 2018 VOL: 20 NO. 3



## RAISE the ROOF

On October 3rd  
Homes  
For All

## Rally

at Leinster House  
Wednesday Oct 3rd  
@12.30-2pm

Trade unions, political parties, students' unions, housing agencies & community and campaign groups have joined forces to demand action on the housing crisis.

**Join us**  
on October 3rd  
and make  
your  
voice heard



# CONNECT

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## Editorial

### Dear Colleague,

Once again, throughout the Union, many of our members are facing into a period of unexpected change. For some these changes will help consolidate employment; however, for others these changes will unfortunately mean a loss of employment.

In the Post Office, due in no small part to the efforts of your Union, the An Post mails area has seen its business model shift away from a declining letter business into a burgeoning parcel and packets business. It is difficult to believe that this necessary shift, which was obvious to anyone studying the mails business, was opposed by senior management and it is only since the departure of the Director that we have seen real growth, which in the long-term will secure many jobs in An Post. Of course, that growth has caused its own problems, as the Post Office was not set up to be a parcels and packets business. There is now an urgent necessity for the Company to develop new methods that facilitate the delivery of new products, and to supply proper equipment and vehicles for our members to carry out their work. Already moves have been made in that direction and new vehicles, such as electronic bikes, are being tested for city centre deliveries. Ultimately, the vast majority of Postpersons in towns and cities will likely need to have vehicle assistance for deliveries in the future, due to the weight restrictions that can be carried for walking and cycling routes.

The single biggest problem for our members in An Post is the planned closure of one of the four Mails Centres. The Company has hired international consultants to look at the feasibility of closing one of those centres and an announcement on these deliberations is due shortly. An Post's decision, against the backdrop of a loss of almost 50% of the peak mail volumes during the boom, may be understandable, but that casts a massive shadow over workers in those Mails Centres, as they wait to see whether or not the Company selects their workplace 'for the chop'. With the appointment of the new Retail Director in An Post, Debbie Byrne, it is likely that there will be an even bigger emphasis put on selling and customer service, given her background in retail, which will ultimately change the way the Post Offices are run and configured.

In relation to the telecoms sector, we have always

dealt with rapid change and that has usually been accompanied by outsourcing or offshoring, depending on which company we were dealing with. For the first time in many years, the tide seems to be turning against those policies, with discussions taking place to bring Netshare back into Vodafone and with the decision of the new owners of eir to bring back in-house the vast bulk of its customer care and contact centres. This will result in approximately 1,100 members carrying out call centre and customer care work as employees of eir, and on any other occasion that would be good news. While it is no doubt welcome news for Cork, Limerick and Sligo, where eir will be basing its call centre operations, the Company has taken the decision to close the Dublin centre previously operated by HCL. At the time of writing, intense discussions are taking place with HCL on the future of our members, particularly in Telephone House (c. 650 members), and it is unclear at this stage whether the issues can be resolved without industrial action. One of the reasons cited for moving call centre work out of Dublin, and one which is out of the control of our members, is the high turnover of staff as a result of the extortionate cost of living in Dublin, particularly in relation to accommodation.

The issue of accommodation and the housing emergency is a daily headline in the media, as this inept government watches idly as the problem gets increasingly worse. There is now nobody in this country, I believe, who is not in some way impacted by the housing emergency. In many ways that impact is hidden, as grandparents and parents do what they can to help their families find places to live. This has resulted in many adults having to move back to the family home in order to try and save for a deposit, which has also resulted in thousands of grandparents minding children in order to allow both parents go to work in pursuit of the basic right to have a roof over their heads. Many of these people are the hidden homeless, but at least they have family support. Every day we see a new category of homeless, with senior citizens now beginning to form their own homeless group, as they are priced out of their own rented accommodation by unscrupulous landlords seeking ever-higher rents. We see students having to cancel college courses due to their inability to find accommodation near the colleges or universities, or indeed, thousands of students live on sofas in the homes of friends and family as they attempt to build their careers. Every

day we read of the increased number of families staying in emergency accommodation, causing untold damage to the development of children in this precarious situation.

All of the above are almost what we could call the new homeless, but it does not take away from the fact that we now have more people genuinely

homeless sleeping on the streets in sleeping bags and now in tented villages throughout the country. It seems the government believes that, because the majority in the country have their own homes, they will not stand up and fight for those less fortunate than them. They will continue to get away with the profiteering of private builders and landlords that they have supported so vigorously over the years.

On the 3rd October, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, will lead a demonstration outside Dáil Éireann, which will include representatives from almost all the opposition parties, the housing charities, housing action groups and students from colleges all over the country. The reason for the demonstration taking place at lunchtime is to coincide with an Opposition bill to try and force the government into taking real action on this emergency. It is my hope that this demonstration will be the start of a broader campaign that will force Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil to adopt solutions on the basis of need, rather than on the basis of what's good for the landlords and developers that support them so avidly.

Therefore, I would ask that you, and any member of your family and friends, to try and make an effort to attend the demonstration on 3rd October in the hope that the people elected to run the country will realise that they can be unelected just as easily.

***The CWU will gather at the Prince's Street corner of the GPO at noon on 3rd October. Anyone participating can meet up there and go to the rally together.***



*Steve Fitzpatrick,  
General Secretary, CWU*

## Palestinian Postal Workers Resist Apartheid

**CWU Organiser Ruairí Creaney attended the conference of the Palestinian Postal Service Workers' Union (PPSWU) in Palestine in June. Here he sets out what he experienced during his time in the occupied West Bank.**

A few weeks ago, Palestine's postal service received an eight-year backlog of mail and parcels that had been held up by Israel on the grounds that it was a "security threat". The post which was deemed such a threat by the third largest army on earth consisted of gifts, online orders, letters to loved ones and even a wheelchair. Employees of Palestine Post are now tasked with sorting through the 10 tonnes of goods. Most of the people doing the sorting are members of the Palestinian Postal Service Workers' Union (PPSWU), whose conference I attended in June.

The PPSWU is part of a new and growing movement of independent trade unions in Palestine organising in intensely difficult circumstances. These trade unions are part of an even larger movement that advocates non-violent resistance to Israel's Apartheid, the most well-known manifestation of which is the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign.

The abnormality and injustice is apparent as soon as one arrives in Ben Gurion Airport, outside Tel Aviv. I had to go to Palestine via Israel since there is no airport in the West Bank and the one that did exist in Gaza was destroyed by Israeli bombs in 2002. Security is notoriously tight in Ben Gurion Airport, and travellers can expect to be thoroughly questioned about their trip to the country. I was advised not to mention that the reason for my visit was to attend a Palestinian trade union conference. Anyone who is seen to be in anyway friendly or supportive of Palestinians will be denied a visa and deported. As such, I was further advised to delete my Facebook and Twitter accounts, as well as any email or text message I have ever received containing the words 'Palestine', 'solidarity' or 'Apartheid'. The self-declared 'Only Democracy in the Middle East' goes to great lengths to prevent the international community from having direct contact with Palestinian civil society organisations.

Crossing from Israel into the West Bank was a surreal experience. A section of the imposing Apartheid Wall – illegal under international law – is my first visible encounter with the occupation. This intimidating structure snakes across 700 kilometres of the Palestinian countryside, spoiling what should be a beautiful landscape. In rural areas, it cuts off farmers from their land while in urban areas it divides communities.



*The Apartheid Wall*

### Language

Much of the language used in discourse about Palestine tends to understate the reality of what is happening there. When the media refers to it as a 'conflict', it serves only to perpetuate a false equivalence between two vastly unequal sides. Israel's army is funded by the world's only superpower – the United States. It has a huge arsenal of fighter jets, tanks, battleships, drones and the most advanced weaponry.

The term 'occupation' also does not adequately explain the oppression of the Palestinians or why it is happening. It almost suggests that it is a temporary situation and implies that Israel has the intention of one day withdrawing from the West Bank and Gaza. Israel has no intention of ending the occupation. Its entire apparatus of occupations consists of permanent structures. The vast Apartheid Wall, the prisons which confine hundreds of Palestinian children, the ever expanding colonial settlements and the military checkpoints aren't going anywhere. This is more than an occupation; it is colonialism. It is a project designed to dehumanise the indigenous people and dispossess them of their land and resources.

The most obvious feature of this colonialism is the 'settlements', yet another term than underplays the reality. Israel's settlements on Palestinian land are not minor outposts or small villages; they are sprawling cities housing tens of thousands of people, most of



whom are from the United States, Canada, Europe and Russia. These ever-growing metropolises are complete with luxury apartment complexes, universities, shopping malls, leisure centres and hospitals. These cities are fortified by electrified barbed wire and yet more military checkpoints with armed guards in an effort to keep out the indigenous Palestinians.



*Checkpoint in Hebron's Old City*

The settlers, too, are heavily armed. When I was in Hebron, where Israel's colony has stolen a significant section of the Old City, a gang of around 40 settlers passed us on the street, many of them openly brandishing M-16 rifles, an obvious attempt to intimidate any Palestinian that lives anywhere near them. Being so close to such fanatically supremacist people was a scary experience even for a white Western European like me, so I can only imagine the terror these settlers inflict on Palestinians. Literally every Palestinian city in the West Bank is surrounded by these ever growing metropolises. The arterial routes between the main Palestinian cities are intersected by settler-only roads which the natives are banned from using as well as permanent army checkpoints, making a Palestinian state within the confines of the two state solution totally impossible. These injustices are compounded by the fact that these Jewish-only cities are built on what was, until very recently, Palestinian villages and farm land that were ethnically cleansed.

## Trade Unions

These are the unenviable conditions under which Palestinian trade unions have to organise. The occupation and the Apartheid dominates every aspect of workers' lives in Palestine and this, inevitably, dictates the activities of trade unionists. Aside from the issues of low pay, insecure work, unpaid wages and discrimination against women, Palestinian trade unionists have to contend with a bureaucratic permit system that strictly polices the movement of workers and the severe limitation of civil liberties that we take for granted. For instance, Imad Temiza, the outgoing president of the PPSWU, is currently banned from using social media because of his criticism of the Palestinian Authority, increasingly seen by Palestinians as a puppet regime that collaborates with the occupation. Union leaders have been arrested and harassed, while union activists are routinely dismissed from their jobs if they try to organise their workmates. In these circumstances, it is incredible that this movement is growing, even if it is at a slow pace.

The conference of the PPSWU, held in the ancient city of Jericho – said to be the oldest city in the world, was attended by around 150 postal workers as well as international guests from Ireland, France and Canada. The theme of the conference was 'Jerusalem: Capital of Palestine' in response to Donald Trump's decision to move the US Embassy to the contested city, which was widely condemned as undermining any chance of a peaceful settlement in the region.

In my own address to the conference, I emphasised the strong solidarity that exists in Ireland for the Palestinian struggle, given our own history of being colonised and oppressed. The announcement that the CWU in Ireland had voted to endorse the BDS movement at our last conference was met with loud applause.



*Ruairí Creaney speaking at PPSWU Conference in Jericho.*

# Organising Update

The resemblance of the Palestinian struggle with the Irish struggle is not just superficial and rhetorical. The new trade union movement that the PPSWU are a part of in many ways resembles the early trade union movement here in Ireland. Just like James Connolly and Jim Larkin argued a century ago, Palestinian trade unionists understand that the advancement of workers' rights is intrinsically connected with the cause of liberation from colonial rule. They understand that liberation struggles must move beyond nationalism and emphasise worker solidarity and internationalism. Underlining this progressivism was the vibrant women's section which had fought successfully to get women elected onto the union's national executive. Having done this, they are leading the fight in the PPSWU and other trade unions to fight against pay discrimination against women and for greater protections for working mothers.



*Imad Temiza, Outgoing President, PPSWU.*

## Sense of hopelessness

Humiliation and petty harassment are features of daily life for Palestinian workers. This can be seen most glaringly at the permanent checkpoints that many workers have to go through in order to get to work every day. They are forced to queue for hours before and after work, hemmed in behind mesh fences. They are then herded into warehouses, through steel turnstiles, searched with metal detectors and the ID cards they have to carry are inspected by heavily armed soldiers. In short, they are treated like cattle, as something less than human. The international community would not tolerate this for a minute if it was happening to white Europeans.

The most dispiriting aspect for any visitor to Palestine is to witness the abject hopelessness that exists there right now. From those I spoke to, Palestinians in their 20s and 30s have close to zero hope that they will ever see justice and freedom for their country. Many of them, seeing no

way of effectively resisting the Apartheid system, have given up hope of flourishing in their own country and have now resigned to the idea of eventually trying to emigrate. They are rightly asking how people living in refugee camps can ever defeat a brutal Israeli army that is funded and armed by the most powerful empire in human history - the United States. They are asking what they can do when the international community allows Israel's racist regime to act with impunity. They are asking what they can do when they are branded "terrorists" if they engage in armed resistance or are simply shot dead by snipers if they engage in unarmed resistance such as has been seen in the Great March of Return.

On the day I landed in Palestine, Israeli tank fire murdered a 24-year-old protester in Gaza during the Great March of Return. A 17-year-old was murdered by a direct shot to the head at the same protest. The following day, an 11-year-old boy was murdered by an Israeli sniper. Israel's strategy of murdering and crippling young Palestinians is how they sow this hopelessness among the youth.

However, I also found that the brutal occupation and Israel's attempt to humiliate an entire nation has led to an incredible resilience among Palestinians and a desire to better themselves collectively. They are obsessed with education. Most of the Palestinians of my generation are able to speak two or three languages and have Masters degrees in education, computer science and finance. The first question that got asked of me every time I met a young Palestinian was about my university education. I was also asked about Irish history and literature, and their grasp of both was impressive. One lad, Ishmael, was quoting lines of James Joyce and Oscar Wilde and asking if I had read their books and was aware of the quotes. To my embarrassment, I had to answer, "no".

The youth of Palestine recognise that education is a weapon of the oppressed, and one day they will use this education to smash the Apartheid system. The Palestinians are a warm, beautiful, strong and determined people. They ask us not for our charity, but our solidarity. They do not want to be thought of as charity cases; they want to be treated as equals with the rest of the human race.

## Solidarity

The huge solidarity that Irish people continually express for their struggle does not go unnoticed in Palestine. In times of abject hopelessness, strong displays of international solidarity can lift spirits in the darkest of situations, and many Palestinians expressed their gratitude to me for Ireland's role in giving them this small bit of hope when much of the rest of the world turns a blind eye. It should be a source of immense pride

for CWU members that we are part of that solidarity movement, and we should build on it.

As trade unionists, supporting Palestinians does not mean that we should simply refuse to buy Israeli produce. As trade unionists, we need to go further. We need to use the leverage and influence we have with companies in our sector to get them to stop handling goods from corporations who profit from Israel's humiliation of Palestinians and the theft of their land. We should ensure that firms like Hewlett Packard, who provide the technology for Israel's racist ID card system, and Caterpillar, whose bulldozers demolish Palestinian homes, pay for their collaboration with Apartheid. We can support Palestinian workers by continuing to have strong links with their trade unions who not only have to fight the bosses, but also have to fight against a brutal racist system that has dispossessed them.

Israel's treatment of the Palestinian people is the human rights issue of our generation. The Dunne's Stores strikers in 1984 inspired people around the world for the sacrifice they made to support the resistance against the Apartheid regime in South Africa, showing the lengths

trade unionists would go to display solidarity with an oppressed and marginalised people. As Nelson Mandela himself said, Irish trade unionists played a significant international role in helping to end Apartheid in South Africa. Today, we are compelled to do the same against Apartheid Israel.



*One of the many military checkpoints*

## NIGHTLINE CAMPAIGN EXPANDS TO REGIONS

Following the recent pay deal in courier company Nightline, CWU Organisers and Nightline Committee members have visited several regional depots across the country, including sites in Waterford, Cork, Limerick and Sligo to outline the details of the agreement for workers.

On foot of the visits, the Union continues to grow in Nightline with members from the regional depots joining the CWU. A number of Admin workers from the Nightline operation have also joined the Union. Organisers have met with these workers and discussed their concerns around the implications for them of the

UPS takeover.

In advance of the Nightline AGM which will be held in October, members from the various Nightline depots will undertake Organising training. The training will provide workers with the skills to grow their Branch and represent members in the workplace. It will also be an opportunity to discuss how to structure the Branch to best represent the expanding membership in Nightline.

The growth of the Union in the various areas of the Nightline operation comes on the back of the hard work of the Committee over the past 18 months and is a demonstration of the power that they have built in their workplace.

This strength will play a key role in further improving the terms and conditions of members in the year ahead.

### HCL Cork Organising Training

In August, the CWU Organising Department conducted an Organising training course with committee members of the HCL Cork Branch in Churchfield. Aaron McCarty, Reece Hogan, Nicola Nolan, Aideen O'Shea & Kieran Kelvin completed a one-day course in both Union Inductions and Grievance & Disciplinary Representation.

The Grievance & Disciplinary module provides committee members with skills to advise, guide and

represent their members on individual issues. Union Induction training gives members the confidence to speak to groups of new staff on the importance of becoming a member of the CWU. The HCL Cork Branch understands that new staff need to join the union at the beginning of their employment, ensuring that these workers are protected and union density remains strong.

It was a successful day and the CWU Organisers look forward to working with this branch again in the future.



# How would it feel to get a letter that is seven or eight years old?

Well that is what is happening at the moment in the West Bank. Palestinian postal service employees are working overtime to sort through 10 tonnes of letters and packages **BLOCKED** by Israel for up to eight years

PPSWU Attached a number of press reports about the matter.

## Palestinian mail blocked by Israel arrives eight years late

**P**ACKAGES, letters and even a wheelchair intended for Palestinians have arrived in the occupied West Bank after Israel released years of undelivered mail.

The post, which includes internet orders that never arrived, had been held in Jordan since 2010 and was released under a one-time agreement.

Palestinian postal workers in the city of Jericho are now faced with sorting through more than 10 tonnes of goods.



An official told AFP it would take another two weeks to sort and deliver.

Ramadan Ghazawi, who works at the post office in Jericho, said the items appeared to have been blocked on security or administrative grounds.



Israel controls entry to the West Bank via the border with Jordan.

In 2008, Israel agreed more autonomy for Palestinian postal services, meaning some international mail could be flown to Jordan and then transferred to the Palestinian territories. But the deal and subsequent agreements appeared to falter, creating a huge postal backlog.

In a statement, Palestinian Authority Communications Minister Allam Moussa accused Israel of having failed to implement a memorandum of understanding signed in 2016 designed to regulate the transfer of international mail.

The Israeli military's Co-ordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (Cogat) told AFP that an agreement was in the works but gave no further details.

Update 20 August 2018: The article has been updated to make reference to the 2008 postal agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

©BBC News Online



## Palestinians scramble to deliver 10 tons of mail blocked by Israel for years

*Packages, letters and even a wheelchair previously stuck in Jordan transferred to PA in one-time deal; postal workers expected to take two weeks to sift through everything*

By HOSSAM EZZEDINE 15 August 2018, 6:12 am 8

**J**ERICHO, West Bank (AFP) — Palestinian postal service employees are working overtime to sort through some 10 tons of letters and packages blocked by Israel for up to eight years, Palestinian officials said Tuesday.



The parcels, dating from between 2010 and this year, had been prevented by Israel from entering the West Bank via Jordan but were released in a one-time deal, the officials said.

The goods range from simple letters to medicine and even wheelchairs for the disabled, AFP journalists found at the sorting center in the West Bank city of Jericho.

Palestinian Telecommunications Minister Allam Mousa accused Israel in a statement of having blocked the delivery and of delaying the implementation of an agreement on postal services.

Israeli authorities confirmed the packages had been transferred and said an agreement was in the works, but did not comment in detail.



Ramadan Ghazawi, an official at the sorting center in Jericho, said he understood some items had been blocked for security reasons, while others were barred on administrative grounds.

"A few days ago Israel allowed more than 10 tons of postal parcels that were stuck in Jordan," he told AFP.

He said it would take his staff another two weeks to sort through all the parcels and get them delivered to their recipients.

Israel controls all entrances and exits to the West Bank and can prevent goods passing through as it sees fit.

Palestinian officials say such control cripples their economy and freedom of movement.

In the sorting center, hundreds of bags were piled on top of each other as workers picked through them in the stifling summer heat.

Ghazawi said that the parcels and letters, mostly the former, had been sent from all over the world.

Many were goods ordered online by Palestinians that never arrived.

A note attached to a wheelchair said it was sent from Turkey in 2015 and meant to be delivered to the Gaza Strip.



COGAT, the Israeli Defense Ministry body responsible for civilian coordination in the Palestinian territories, said the release was part of confidence building measures after the two sides agreed on a postal entry deal "about a year ago."

It said while the deal had not yet gone into force for future deliveries, it had "allowed a one-time transfer of approximately ten and a half tons of mail that had been held in Jordan."

Some of the transferred goods had been broken, and Ghazawi said that to avoid complaints they were delivering them along with a statement saying Israeli authorities had delivered them in this condition.

©The Israeli Times Online



# RAISE

# ↑the

# ROOF

**On October 3rd**

# Homes For All

# Rally

at Leinster House  
Wednesday Oct 3rd  
@12.30-2pm

Trade unions, political parties, students' unions, housing agencies & community and campaign groups have joined forces to demand action on the housing crisis.

**Join us**  
on October 3rd  
and make  
your  
voice heard

# THE HOUSING CRISIS IS AN ISSUE FOR EVERYONE

Most workers now struggle to buy a home of their own as house prices have spiralled beyond the reach of those on low and average incomes.

Soaring rents have put huge financial strain on workers, students and their families, often paying for poor quality accommodation with little or no security of tenure.

It is a key issue for women as our rate of female homelessness is now double that of other EU states and more than 60% of homeless families are headed by lone parents, the majority of whom are women.

Meanwhile, housing waiting lists grow ever longer and homeless numbers are at record levels. Thousands are now crowded into unsuitable accommodation, with families forced to raise children in hotel rooms and other emergency dwellings. Government policy to date has failed to solve the crisis.

But on October 3rd there is a chance to change course, when an opposition party motion on the crisis is debated in the Dáil.

The motion demands radical new action on the crisis, including the construction of quality, affordable public housing, preventing people from being evicted into homelessness and enshrining the right to housing in the constitution.

It is supported by Sinn Féin, People Before Profit, the Labour Party, Solidarity, the Social Democrats, the Green Party and Independents4Change, with others expected to add their backing. The motion also has the support of a wide range of trade unions,

housing agencies, and community and campaign groups representing tens of thousands of people across all sectors of our society.

A special rally has been called for outside Leinster House at lunchtime on Wednesday October 3rd by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, in conjunction with the National Homeless & Housing Coalition, the Union of Students in Ireland, the National Women's Council of Ireland and key housing and homeless agencies.

**So join us on  
Oct 3rd and help  
us Raise the Roof  
for change**

[www.ictu.ie/raisetherooft](http://www.ictu.ie/raisetherooft)



#RaiseTheRoof #HomesforAll #Oct3rd



[https://www.facebook.com/  
NationalHomelessandHousingCoalition/](https://www.facebook.com/NationalHomelessandHousingCoalition/)



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# CWU win 'right to bargain' finding under 2015 Act, ECAS pay rise backed

The Labour Court has delivered a significant new pay recommendation under the 'right to bargain' 2001-2015 IR Acts, outlining what would have amounted to a 13.6% pay increase for Emergency Call Answering Service (ECAS) operators, members of the CWU.

The new recommendation addresses four significant aspects of remuneration of the ECAS operators, formerly employed by Conduit Enterprises.

Significantly, the Court accepted the union's use of public sector comparators in a case involving a private sector firm, an argument strongly resisted by the company.

The Court recommended a total €1.50 increase from the [2016] hourly rate of pay, across three phases, between now and June 1, 2019, for the ECAS operators.

At the time of the dispute's referral to the Labour Court, in 2016, ECAS operators were on €11 per hour. However, Conduit is no longer the employer BT Ireland (who had subcontracted to Conduit previously) retained the Government contract to run the ECAS following a recent tender and is now the direct employer of the ECAS.

Similar to Conduit, BT Ireland is a non-union company.

In the time since the claim was referred to the Court, BT Ireland has told IRN it has made the following changes to ECAS operators' terms and conditions:

- new hourly base pay of €12 per hour (and annual pay reviews)
- enhanced night allowance
- increased lead operator allowance at lead centre
- occupational pension scheme with employer contribution, life assurance and income protection cover
- healthcare fully funded by BT
- increased annual leave entitlement
- introduction of full maternity leave pay, paternity leave pay, adoptive leave pay.

## Origins of Dispute

The CWU began an organising and recognition campaign at the ECAS several years ago, culminating in industrial action in early 2016. It then proceeded to

utilise the revamped 2001 Act; its dispute was referred to the Labour Court, on October 14, 2016, following engagement at the WRC.

The Court first decided on a preliminary issue of whether the union's membership at ECAS was enough for the Court to investigate the dispute; in early 2017, it found the requirements for it to investigate the union's claim were met.

The Court now outlines in a clear recommendation its approach to the claim: whether the comparators chosen by the CWU HSE ambulance call takers, Gardaí emergency call takers and local authority Fire Service call takers were comparable; then follows with a comparison of skill, responsibility, physical & mental effort; and then a recommendation on four aspects of remuneration: pay, pension, night shift allowance, and the lead operator allowance.

## No Retrospection

On pay, the Court said the ECAS operator rate should be adjusted to €11.50 per hour with effect from June 5, 2018, then further adjusted to €12 with effect from January 1, 2019, and then to €12.50 from June 1, 2019.

The Court dismissed a claim to make its recommendation retrospective to the date of the claim (October 14, 2016). It said it "cannot interpret the legislation as providing scope for such a recommendation and no submission has been made which would imply that, within the construct of this Act, such a course of action is available to the Court."

## Comment

CWU General Secretary, Steve Fitzpatrick, said the Court's detailed ruling "vindicates" the hard-fought dispute waged by ECAS workers against the "intolerable and demeaning conditions they were forced to work under by Conduit/British Telecom". Their campaign has resulted in a Court recommendation of a "significant increase in pay and improved employment benefits". It will ballot on the outcome, with a view to writing to BT "to confirm they will implement the Court's ruling, in full."

A BT spokesperson said the company is reviewing the

recommendations, adding: “It is important to note that irrespective of this dispute, following the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment awarding the Emergency Call Answering Service contract to BT in 2018, and the subsequent transfer of operators into BT, we proactively introduced a number of enhancements” (detailed above). These were achieved through “direct engagement and consultation with the employees and their Employee Representatives.”

Conduit Enterprises was represented by Rosemary Mallon BL, instructed by A&L Goodbody; the CWU was represented by CC solicitors. (*LCR21722, Chairman: Kevin Foley*)

## Labour Court maps out ‘step by step’ approach in new ‘right to bargain’ case

The second pay recommendation of the Labour Court under the revised 2001/2015 Industrial Relations Acts, between Conduit Enterprises and the CWU, creates more ‘terra firma’ for the ‘right to bargain’ Act, arguably setting several precedents that are likely to inform further cases and generate discussion in the IR community.

In Conduit Enterprises and the CWU (*LCR 21722*), the Labour Court sets out new pay hourly pay rates and the introduction of a night shift allowance for Emergency Call Answering Service (ECAS) operators, formerly employees of Conduit Enterprises, and who are members of the Communications Workers’ Union

A standout feature of this case, seen by IRN, is that the Court accepted the principle of using public sector comparators in a case involving a private sector company.

“It is not for the Court to move beyond the comparator workers identified by the claimant (workers)”

It is only the second pay recommendation utilised under section 2(1) of the 2001 Industrial Relations Act, since it was amended by the 2015 IR Act (the first being *Freshways*, written two years ago).

That it has taken about 20 months between the CWU claim being referred to the Court to the Court’s recommendation on the comparator claim, with several hearings in between and a preliminary recommendation on whether the CWU has sufficient membership for the claim to proceed under the 2001 Act indicates, at least, the rigour that has gone into the Court process and its deliberate approach.

The recommendation is important not only for the ECAS operators who, through the implementation of the Court’s terms, would have seen a pay increase of nearly 14% within one year (had their pay remained unchanged

in the meantime), but the clear conclusions of the Court in respect of several aspects of the claim essentially map out more routes, for any union considering utilising the 2001 Act or an employer having to defend against such a claim.

The main ‘takeaways’ of *LCR21722* with precedential import can be summarised as follows:

- There is **no automatic exclusion from using public sector workers as comparators for a private sector company**. The Court rejected Conduit’s argument that it could not be compared to public sector operators (emergency call takers in the HSE, Gardaí and local authority Fire Service) merely because it is a private company. The Court’s chairman, Kevin Foley said the Court “cannot conclude that such a structural divide is intended to be imputed to the Act”.
- **The selection of comparable employers for the purpose of a section 2(1) claim might be the prerogative of the union pursuing the claim**. Conduit sought to compare itself with commercial call centres, but without witness evidence; it would seem the only comparators that are relevant are the employers built into the union’s claim; the case then stands or falls on these chosen comparators.
- **The comparators have to be “comparable”, they don’t need to be “identical”**.
- **A claim for retrospective application of any beneficial pay recommendation won’t be considered by the Court**. The CWU’s solicitor (CC Solicitors) sought retrospection of the pay increase applied to the date of the claim (14/10/16), as opposed to the date of the recommendation (5/6/18), but the Court said the Act does not provide scope for retrospection and that it is not an option available to the Court.

## ‘High-Octane Environment’

In its claim, the CWU used the following workers for comparability to its members in the ECAS: emergency call takers in the HSE, emergency call takers in An Garda Síochána and emergency call takers in local authority Fire Brigade Services.

The union argued that these public sector workers are similar to the ECAS operators “as those organisations deliver emergency call taking services as part of the emergency response arrangements for the State’s emergency services” and that the totality of remuneration for ECAS operators provide a lesser benefit having regard to the totality of remuneration for the three types of workers identified as its comparators.

The CWU’s comparison explored the following requirements between ECAS operators and its chosen

comparators: skills, responsibility, physical effort and mental effort.

The union said the ECAS work environment is “high octane 365/7 day 24-hour”.

It also pointed that the operators are classified as being part of ‘fire service activities’ and ‘ambulance service and other human health activities’ by the CSO for statistical purposes.

Conduit maintained the ECAS is not similar to a public sector environment and the pay and conditions of its operators were not out of line with appropriate comparator workers and employments.

The employer said the ECAS operators are closely aligned with a customer service operator in a call centre and used an internal report that identified 15 call centres (understood to be mostly UK based).

Conduit believed the operators should be classified as ‘Activities of call centres’.

## ‘Dispute’ is key

The union noted no formal experience or qualifications are required for ECAS or the public sector comparators training is mainly ‘on the job’; all positions have a high level of urgency in how they handle calls and transfer them to the relevant service (none of the relevant positions despatch).

While Conduit had its own internal review of comparisons in the call centre sector, it did not bring witnesses to the Court hearings. The CWU brought a civil servant emergency call taker in An Garda Síochána and a HSE employee who had worked as an emergency call taker in the Ambulance Service (and is now a despatcher in the Ambulance Service).

The Court determined the work of the ECAS claimants and the public sector comparators contain “many common elements”: the work is entirely phone based and all categories deal with exactly identical call situations and callers; they “are call faced with stressed callers and all are required to engage with those callers in a structured and largely preplanned way.”

The Court continued: “The legislation requires the Court to establish that workers are comparable. It does not require the Court to establish that they are identical. The Act essentially requires that the workers and those with whom they claim they are comparable be capable of comparison.”

## What was before it?

While Conduit argued the ECAS workers are comparable to a range of call centre workers, the Court said that might be the case but the dispute before it arose from the CWU's claim that the ECAS operators are comparable to emergency call staff of the identified public sector

emergency services.

All the Court could consider was the dispute before it. It added, “the Court is not aware of a dispute between the parties as to whether the totality of remuneration and terms and conditions of employment of the claimant workers provide a lesser benefit than those of a range of workers employed as customer service agents in call centres.”

At first glance the Court's wording might suggest it is the union which holds all the cards as to what comparators are to be used, but it may also serve as a lesson for any employer defending a section

2(1) claim, that it will have to do its homework and demonstrate at least a matching level of rigour has gone into its own assessment.

Yet the keyword on this comparator aspect is “dispute”, as the Court notes in LCR21722: “It is not for the Court in the within dispute to move beyond the comparator workers identified by the claimant workers so as to identify some other workers in some other employments who could be contended to be comparable to the claimant workers. The Act requires the Court to address the claim giving rise to the dispute and not to address matters which are not in dispute between the parties.”

## Public Sector Comparison

It was apparent from the case that Conduit was strongly resisting comparisons with public sector employers.

It said the ECAS was not in competition with the HSE, Gardai and Fire Service comparators and were not similar in size.

The company stated: “it was wholly inappropriate to compare the operation of a private company with that of public organisations”.

While the Court noted the dynamics of the ECAS operational arrangements and market pressure is very different to that of the comparators in the claim, it stated unequivocally the following:

“If the Court were to regard such considerations as determinative of the within matter the Court would effectively be concluding that the legislation is to be interpreted in such a way as to mean that it is inoperative in all circumstances where the disputing workers are employed in the private sector and the comparator employment is a public sector employment.

“The Court, having regards to the stated purpose of the legislation, cannot conclude that such a structural divide is intended to be imputed to the Act.” (IRN emphasis)

## Skill, Responsibility, Effort

The Court next compared the ECAS operators with the work of the three chosen public sector comparators,



making the following distinctions.

The demands upon HSE Ambulance Service call takers in carrying out their work are “significantly greater” than the ECAS operators in terms of skill, mental effort and responsibility; the demands upon both HSE comparators and ECAS workers are similar in terms of physical effort.

The demands upon Civil Servants employed as emergency call takers in An Garda Síochána are “somewhat greater” in terms of skill and responsibility but are similar in terms of physical and mental effort.

The demands upon emergency call takers in local authority Fire Services are “somewhat greater” in terms of skill and responsibility but are similar in terms of physical and mental effort.

The Court was satisfied that the totality of remuneration and conditions of employment of ECAS operators “provides a lesser benefit than the totality of remuneration and conditions of employment of comparable workers in similar employments.”

The scale of difference in the totality of remuneration and conditions of employment between the ECAS claimants and the HSE comparators “can be justified.”

But the scale of difference in the totality of remuneration and conditions of employment between the ECAS claimants and the comparators in An Garda Síochána and the Fire Services “cannot be justified.”

In making its recommendations on pay, pension, night shift allowance and lead operator allowance, the Court took into consideration the viability of the employer’s business and the sustainability of the employment that it maintains.

## Full Pay Recommendations

The full terms of the pay recommendations of the Court in LCR21722 are:

- The rate of pay of ECAS operators should be adjusted to €11.50 with effect from the date of this recommendation [June 5, 2018]. It should be further adjusted to €12 per hour with effect from January 1, 2019 and to €12.50 with effect from June 1, 2019.
- The Court makes no recommendation with regard to pension.
- The rate of night shift allowance should be 15% for every hours worked between 12 midnight and 8am. This to take effect from the date of this recommendation. The Court makes no recommendation with regard to the current weekend rate arrangements.
- The Court understands that the rate of pay for lead operators is made up of the basic rate of ECAS operator with an allowance in respect of time spent

as a lead operator. The Court does not recommend a change to the lead operator allowance. The Court recommends that the current allowance should apply to the revised rate of pay for ECAS operator in accordance with the Court’s recommendation on pay above.

## No Retrospection?

The CWU’s solicitor (CC Solicitors) made an application for retrospective effect of the recommendation.

However, the Court made the following statement in response to this request: “The Court cannot interpret the legislation as providing scope for such a recommendation and no submission has been made which would imply that, within the construct of this Act, such a course of action is available to the Court.”

This would appear to rule out any retrospection for section 2(1) claims in future. While such might not be that significant for any other section 2(1) claims, it is noted the Conduit recommendation took 20 months to come to fruition.

IRN also understands that the CWU and its solicitor are further exploring the matter of retrospection for section 2(1) claims.

## Precedent

LCR21722 is sure to generate discussion and debate amongst IR practitioners. The detail of the recommendation has, arguably, opened new windows that were not heretofore major talking points, namely the public versus private sector comparison.

This clear message that there is no automatic exclusion of public versus private sector comparisons could reignite interest in utilising the 2001 Act. Whether it will actually lead to other claims is up to unions.

What might be of further interest to employer representatives is what comparators will be considered for a section 2(1) claim. It would appear from LCR21722 that the prerogative lies with the union pursuing the claim.

But it might also encourage a prospective non-union employer being challenged under the Act to apply a more evidence-based defence of its remuneration package, knowing it will have to do a thorough job to convince the Labour Court what it pays its staff is not out of line with the industry standard.

That Conduit was strongly resistant to the public sector comparators might be self-evident to IR practitioners, but how the Court treated the company’s challenge to having this comparison might carry the most weight in what LCR21722 means for industrial relations in Ireland.

*By Andy Prendergast (IRN)*

# Irish specialist utilities service provider KN Group is set to be bought by a French peer for more than €150m, the Irish Independent can reveal.



Picture: Sportsfile

*KN, advised by Clearwater International, will retain its senior management.*

The buyer is Circet, a leading French telecommunications contractor with annual revenues of almost €800m that is backed by Advent International, an American private equity firm.

The proposed amalgamation, which is in the final stages of agreement and is subject to European competition law clearance, would result in a windfall for Donagh Kelly, KN Group's chief executive.

The parties did not disclose the consideration being paid but it's believed a company of KN's scale will fetch over €150m.

Mr Kelly, who is listed in KN's UK Companies Office filings as being a "person with significant control", owning at least 75pc of the business directly or indirectly, will continue to lead the €350m turnover KN group.

He will also assume the position of deputy CEO to Circet CEO Philippe Lamazou.

KN, advised by Clearwater International, will retain its senior management.

Both companies will continue to operate under their own brands, with little change to either business in their respective geographies anticipated. KN, which has significant contracts with the two largest telecoms operators in the UK and Ireland, provides services to clients including Eir, Vodafone, Sky, Virgin, BT, ESB and the London Underground.

It will continue to operate under the KN brand and there is no intention to centralise any functions to France.

"Over the last number of years, the management team has been looking at strategic options which would allow KN to continue its recent strong growth trajectory," Mr Kelly told the Irish Independent.

*"The partnership with Circet quickly emerged as an*

*obvious solution allowing us to undertake ambitious network rollout plans across Ireland, the UK and internationally.*

*"The deal, which is subject to anti-trust clearance, will further increase the scale and expertise KN can offer our clients.*

*"It will also enable us to provide an enhanced fully managed service, along with the stability required to service our customers' growth plans. A planned reinvestment by the KN shareholders in the new relationship will build a foundation for the growth of the two businesses in partnership."*

Mr Kelly said anti-trust clearance is expected before the end of the year.

KN, which employs 2,500, is a leader in Ireland in providing services to the telecoms, power, and transport infrastructure sectors among others. It builds the physical infrastructure required for fibre broadband services, for example, as well as working to build power networks.

That provides plenty of opportunity for growth in the Irish market as efforts to get broadband to rural homes and premises continue. In addition, growth in the data centre industry here and the associated need for power generation may also benefit KN.

The business performed strongly in its last financial year, according to its most recent accounts, which cover the 12 months to the end of February 2017. Turnover was up 15.5pc year-on-year to more than €231m. Operating profit also grew sharply, by almost a third, to €11.1m.

As for Circet, it was recently acquired by Advent International. In 2017 Circet had sales of around €750m with around 3,200 employees.

**Source: Irish Independent**

## eir in 'unjustified' charges showdown

### Business Technology

eir is headed for a new broadband clash with Ireland's telecoms regulator over "unjustified" charges in rural Ireland.

In her first major interview since becoming chief executive, Carolan Lennon said that eir may challenge price reductions set to be imposed by ComReg on eir's rural broadband service.

"We think it's way too early for this," she told the Sunday Independent. "If we need to challenge it, we will."

on eir's network.

However, eir's Lennon said that the company's wholesale charges are substantially less than the actual cost to eir of connecting rural homes.

"If you look at the UK's rural connection charges, you're talking about over £500 to connect a home, while in some European rural areas, it can be a couple of thousand of euros," she said.

"It's only four years since we started rolling out fibre and already we're talking about driving the prices down.

"The regulator has a job to make the environment

***"We will certainly be proposing quite substantial changes to eir's ability to choose what the connection charge should be."***

A spokesman for ComReg said that "substantial" changes to key eir rural wholesale broadband prices were on the way. This includes eir's current €272 wholesale charge to connect rural homes to its network.

"We don't like that charge and we don't think it's justified," said the ComReg spokesman.

*"We will certainly be proposing quite substantial changes to eir's ability to choose what the connection charge should be."*

Mainstream rival operators have long complained about the charge, saying it locks them out of offering high-speed services to rural customers.

"To a large extent, we are relying on ComReg delivering," said one senior executive in a rival telecoms firm hoping to offer broadband services

right for capital investment. For that, you need a level of predictability to get a return. If we need to challenge this, we will."

eir is also protesting against its 'universal service obligation', a legal tenet which requires it to keep funding remote rural telephone poles.

Lennon's remarks come as eir prepares an unprecedented €1bn national broadband upgrade plan that will upscale every city-based and urban home from copper to high speed fibre.

The 1.4 million-home plan, which is a direct assault on Virgin's cable domination in Irish cities, will start next year and is the first major move by French billionaire Xavier Niel, whose NJJ is now the majority shareholder in eir.

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# Dáil Eireann

## Joint Committee on Communications, Climate Action & Environment

### Extracts from the meeting on the 4th September 2018

*An Post has been stabilised, because of the action that has been taken, and is now one of the few mail services in the world that is expanding its service, from a five-days-a week letter service to a six-days-a-week parcel service. The fabric of services An Post delivers has been strengthened.*

**Minister Naughton**

*The Minister referred to An Post's transformation from a point where it was virtually insolvent 18 months ago. PWC and McKinsey noted we would lose €180 million within five years if we did not take action. We have had to go out and find €200 million profit. Within approximately 15 months from that date, we have more than €100 million. This is about us getting to a position of sustainability and breaking even.*

We have been strong in pushing him to ask his colleagues in the Cabinet to provide more services. It is absolutely vital. It drives me nuts to think that driving licences are not available in post offices. I have spent a week defending the fact that people have to travel 7 km farther to post offices when, in many instances, it is necessary for a person to travel 100 km in order to get a driving licence. All those services should be made available through post offices.

Regarding government services, I will merely list a few: car tax, M50 toll payments, Leap payments, the public services card and any digital ID. It is astonishing that one cannot buy a Leap card in a post office. Digital ID is becoming a bigger issue. It is not just for government services. It is also something that can be offered commercially for banks and elsewhere where one needs digital identification.

**David McRedmond CEO An Post**

**Deputy Danny Healy-Rae:** -----and in spite of what people say, I saw all of the senior hurling match.



The photo of Danny Healy Rae that appeared on social media during last week's All-Ireland Hurling Finals.

**Deputy Danny Healy-Rae:** *There are people in the GPO who have been paid for the past ten years for doing nothing there. There are hundreds of people there and they are not accountable to anybody.*

**Chairman Hildegard Naughton:** *Your point is very well made.*

**Deputy Mattie McGrath:** *Management are more concerned with cushy offices and big jobs for themselves. Why do we not sell the GPO? We cannot get rid of the idle staff who are in there so sell the damn place and they will have to get them out. They got them out in 1916 and it was a much more important issue. It is scandalous what is going on there. The Minister has told me before that there are staff in there who are unemployed and not gainfully employed.*

### An Post signals possible end for GPO HQ.

#### However there are, the haves and the have nots.

Much ado has been made about the so called dilapidated conditions at the GPO Dublin. This recent discovery came very much as a surprise to the 900 residents, in the sardine like conditions. More surprising was the speed of movement by the Board of An Post to agree the CEO explore potential alternative locations, in addition a possible office refurbishment. So enthusiastic were they to find a new home and improve their home comforts, a restraining order of sorts, had to be placed on board members seeking to activate the evacuation policy. The accelerated desire to fund capital expenditure for investment to provide office accommodation fit for the business and its employees, while most laudable, is in contrast to conditions elsewhere at the company. It was also suspiciously linked to a type of eviction order under the guise of a voluntary redundancy programme.

#### CWU Branch Secretary Declan Fitzgerald outlines serious accommodation issues in West Cork

- Birds, believed to be pigeons, nesting within the building. They appear to be mainly congregated within the area around the rear entrance to the office. If this area was only used as an entrance/exit things would be bad enough but this is the area where the town parcel postal operative sorts his parcels prior to loading his van and on a number of occasions he has had to change his shirt due to bird droppings landing on him. This is totally unacceptable as, apart from the discomfort this would cause, the risk of disease from pigeon droppings is high.
- The conditions are overcrowded and unsafe.
- The staff in Clonakilty have to be commended for their dedication to their customers in ensuring that the mail continues to be processed but their patience is wearing .

- The current situation cannot be allowed to continue as the current set up is an accident waiting to happen, and this will only get worse as the parcel business increases in the run up to Christmas.
- In its Building Programme 2008-2014 An Post indicated in its Capital Building Programme provision was made to address the conditions-Nothing developed!
- In Bantry the Parcels are sorted across from the DSU in an open air car park
- In one bad experience a cage load of Parcels ended up in the river.

Welcome confirmation was received from An Post at the time of writing that finance to address the West Cork dilapidation had been secured.



## Permanent Appointments: Update

In the Spring addition of Connect we provided an update on the Union's efforts to secure permanent appointments for temporary staff at An Post, in accordance with Revised Staffing arrangements. As a result of the Union's efforts we received confirmation in August of a further 132 members being permanently appointed. Branch Secretaries were advised separately with the details of those to be appointed.

The outcome of the review was based on service up to week 15 of 2018 (week commencing 9th April 2018.). The members concerned were issued with permanent contracts from a current date with seniority subsequently being determined by the relevant local HR Manager taking into consideration accumulated service from July 2011.

The Company also confirmed that once the contracts for this

group of employees were finalised they would immediately bring matters up to date, by reference to service accumulated to the most recent week, to determine further appointments for employees that now meet the criteria for permanent appointment. The Union expects to receive the outcome of this review shortly.

Separately a joint working group has been established between the Union and the Company to examine issues relating to contracts of employment and reactivation of the transfer list. The work of this Group is ongoing, and it is expected that they will complete their examination by the end of the year. Should any member have an issue with appointments or contracts, they should contact their Branch Secretary who will provided them with assistance.



## COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS' UNION MEDICAL BENEFIT FUND – CLAIM FORM

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM IN BLOCK CAPITALS

Member's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Staff Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Branch: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### PREFERRED PAYMENT METHOD:

Place an X in the box of your choice

ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFER

☐

CHEQUE

☐

### BANK DETAILS:

Please complete details below if you selected 'Electronic Fund Transfer'

NAME OF BANK: \_\_\_\_\_ PLEASE PRINT

NAME ON ACCOUNT: \_\_\_\_\_ PLEASE PRINT

IBAN:

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ACCOUNT NO: \_\_\_\_\_ SORT CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

### WHO IS THIS CLAIM FOR (tick all that apply):

Member (You)

☐

Spouse/Civil Partner

☐

Child (under 18)

☐

Please tick box(es) and enter amount(s) in the categories that you wish to claim under. If the claim is for a Spouse/Civil Partner, please fill in their name. If the claim is for a child, please fill in their name AND date of birth:

DENTAL

☐

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Name

Child's DOB

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OPTICAL

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SURGICAL & MEDICAL APPS

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TOTAL AMOUNT OF CLAIM

☐

€

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## INCOMPLETE FORMS WILL NOT BE PROCESSED

### DATA PROTECTION:

The information collected here will only be used for the purpose of processing your claim from the Medical Benefit Fund and will not be shared with any third-party. If you consent to the use of your data for this purpose, please sign the form below.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_



## Congress Survey reveals half of young workers go hungry to pay rent

One in two young workers are struggling to cover their housing costs and are going without meals and other essentials to pay their rent according to a new survey from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

*The national opinion poll of 1,500 trade union members under the age of 34 on their housing costs was conducted online between 01 and 14 June.*

The survey was carried out by Congress ahead of the Labour Employer Economic Forum (LEEF) discussions between Government, union and employer representatives on housing.

Congress recognises the significant and unacceptable impact of our broken housing system on vulnerable individuals and families with young children experiencing homelessness and is continuing to lobby TDs to commit to adopting our **Charter for Housing Rights**, which sets out key principles on the creation of a secure and sustainable housing system, including: Declaring a Housing Emergency, Establishing a Legal Right to Housing, Guaranteeing Tenants Rights, Preventing Evictions into Homelessness and developing a National Land Use policy (see [www.ictu.ie](http://www.ictu.ie)).

This particular piece of research focused on the impact of the housing crisis on a generation of people who are sandwiched between high housing costs and low wages, to allow us take a detailed look behind snappy terms such as ‘generation rent’ and ‘delayed adulthood’” said Congress Social Policy Officer, Dr Laura Bambrick.

Commenting on the survey findings Congress General Secretary, Patricia King said, “The findings are worse than feared”.

“Lives are being damaged and destroyed and a whole generation of young workers are now feeling alarming levels of frustration, insecurity and despondency with their housing situation. We are failing badly our young people” she said.

Ms King said, “Congress will use these stark findings to continue to put pressure on Government to take action through our ongoing housing campaign and in the upcoming social dialogue with ministers and employers”.

### Key Headline Findings

1. Over half (54 per cent) of all young workers are struggling to cover their housing costs. One in every two have had to borrow or sacrifice another basic need, such as food, heating and transportation, in order to pay their rent or mortgage in the past year.

Of those young workers struggling to make the rent, one in six (17 per cent) are unable to keep their head above water and are in to arrears.

2. Two in five (40 per cent) of all young workers are spending in excess of the 30 per cent rent- to- income ratio of housing affordability.

Half of these workers are spending between €31 - €40 out of every €100 take-home pay on rent.

One-quarter are spending between €41 - €50.

The other quarter are spending above €51 in every €100 net earnings, which represents one in ten of all young workers spending more than half of their wages on housing.

3. Almost half (46 per cent) of all young workers are frustrated that they remain living in their parents’ home or that they are trapped renting. One in six (18%) are very frustrated with their current living arrangements.
4. One-third (33 per cent) of all young workers are blighted by housing insecurity, with one in three having little or no confidence in being able to continue living in their current home for as long as they would wish.
5. The vast majority (74 per cent) of young workers have little or no confidence in being able to buy a home in the future should they wish to.
6. Over eight in ten (84 per cent) of all young workers say housing will influence how they vote in the next election.



# War and Remembrance

The British Postal Museum & Archive



Post Office Rifles Regiment

by Rory Delany

During my early days as a postman in Rathmines in the late 1970s and early 1980s it was still possible to encounter a few fading first and second hand memories of the Great War or First World War as it later became known. Some of the senior postmen, when recalling memories of their early days in the job, would relate tales of one armed and one eyed postmen who had resumed their Post Office duties when the war had ended. There were still some veterans living in the area and I called regularly to two houses where aging ladies kept framed photographs on display of brothers that they had lost in the war. In another Rathgar house there was a retired Royal Mail employee, Mr Madden, who told me that he had started in the Post Office in his native county of Mayo in 1916 at just 12 years of age. In response to my surprise at his tender recruitment age he told me that the recruitment age restriction was reduced so that younger boys like him could be recruited along with women to fill the places of the many men who had gone off to war.

These first and second hand oral memories have long since disappeared and sadly, while there has been a steady flow of publications relating to the Irish experience of the First World War, there hasn't to my knowledge been any study of the role played by Irish postal workers in the war. It would seem to me that it is a subject worthy of examination as the Post Office was a major employer and, from a rather brief examination of readily available records, it would appear that many of its employees participated in the conflict.

Readily available records such as online newspaper reports, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission records and the 1911 census provide sufficient information to draw together an interesting snapshot of the involvement of postal workers from this island in the war, from the initial enthusiastic rush to 'join up' to the efforts to raise a fitting memorial to those who never came home.

## Answering The Call

It is often asserted that Irishmen who 'joined up' did so either because they were of a particular political or religious persuasion or as an alternative to unemployment and poverty. While there is an element of truth to such an assertion contemporary reports indicate that men of all religions from every corner of the country left relatively secure and much sought after jobs to join in the war effort. Many of these men were established employees of the Post Office. The Irish Times carried several reports that give some indication of the level of voluntary enlistment of Post Office employees into the armed forces and of the effects this recruitment had. These are some examples:

### Tyrone (March 1915)

*"Enthusiastic scenes were witnessed at Omagh Railway Station yesterday morning when eleven postmen and Post Office officials left to join the Post Office Rifles. The contingent, which consisted of six men from Dromore and one from Castlederg, left by the 12.30 train for Dublin and received a great send off from a large crowd of townspeople and their fellow employees of the Post Office"*

### Clonmel (March 1915)

*"The Post Office staff has been depleted by the number of postmen and telegraph boys who have joined"*

### New Ross June 1915

*"Four women have been appointed auxiliary postmen in New Ross to fill the places of the postmen who have gone to the war"*



## Ennis (November 1915)

*"The Ennis Post Office has now sent the following to the front; - Messrs. Harnett and Hayes of the Telegraphic Staff; Cannon and Moore of the Postal Staff; Davoren and Hanrahan of the Postmen Staff. Two Postmen from Ennistymon, one from Lisdeen and one from Mullough have volunteered and been accepted"*

## Dublin (Christmas 1916)

*"Over 200 employees of all classes at the Dublin GPO are on active service and this year the Postal authorities have been unable to get within about 200 of the number of extra hands usually taken on for the Christmas sorting work. But it is anticipated that the shortage of men will be about balanced by the anticipated falling off in volume of work as compared with previous years whilst the men taken on to fill the places of those gone to the front have long since completed their training and are thoroughly efficient public servants".*

In addition to its headquarters, telegraph and public office functions, the GPO of 1916 also accommodated the 'Dublin' delivery office. One of the 200 GPO employees who had gone to the front was JF Connell a postman attached to the delivery office. Mr Connell was the recipient of the Distinguished Conduct Medal, one of the highest military awards that could be awarded to an ordinary soldier. While home on leave in March 1916 Mr Connell was presented with a watch by his post office colleagues as a token of their admiration. The presentation took place in the GPO, the same GPO that just a few weeks later would be occupied by rebels and which forever will be associated with a change in the course of Irish history.

## The Post Office Rifles

The Post Office Rifles that the Tyrone postal workers set off to join was a London based Territorial unit of the British army that recruited from the ranks of the post office workforce. Over 1,500 'riflemen' were killed during the first world war. Although home addresses aren't recorded for all these casualties over 30 of the casualties have Irish addresses listed against their names. A check of these 30 names and addresses against the census of 1911 confirms that nineteen of the men were working in the post office a few years earlier. The other men are likely to have joined the post office after the census. The following are the names of those casualties for whom it has been possible to confirm an address and a post office occupation. The addresses are as recorded at that time.

Bernard Carolan's record at Tyne Cot Memorial in Belgium proudly proclaims "23 years service at Post Office, Dundalk"

The 19 Post Office Riflemen (*See Table 1 overleaf*) were undoubtedly just a small fraction of the total number of postal workers who didn't return to Ireland to resume their post office duties as most of the post office employees who enlisted would most likely have joined one of the many Irish regiments of the British Army.

## Remembrance

Soon after the war memorials to employees who had fallen were erected in larger private businesses such as Arthur Guinness and Sons, The Bank of Ireland and the Railway companies. It is likely that more post office workers fell in the war than did employees of these businesses but, as an arm of government in the newly formed state, the new Department of Post and Telegraphs is unlikely to have given serious consideration to the possibility of a workplace war memorial to postal workers. Anyway, the GPO was a burnt shell and by the time it reopened in 1929 it had become a national shrine and sentiment regarding Irish participation in the Great War had shifted somewhat. However, the men weren't forgotten. Even though the War of Independence was in full swing a national drive was underway to raise funds for the erection of an Irish National War Memorial "To Commemorate The Imperishable Deeds Of Irishmen Who Have Made The Great Sacrifice". (This would ultimately result in the beautiful Islandbridge War Memorial Gardens in Dublin).

The list of public subscriptions towards the memorial makes for interesting reading. Reflecting the nationwide nature of the enlistment for the war, the subscriptions towards the memorial appear to have come in from postal staff right across the country and from every class of office. A 1920 list of subscribers from the south east includes "The postmen of Avoca, the postmen of Aughrim and on then alphabetically office by office from Ballycarnew to "the postmen of Tinahealy".

Another list shows Dublin subscriptions that

### PRESENTATION TO A D.C.M.

His colleagues of all ranks met in the Dublin Post Office on Friday evening last to present Mr. J. F. Connell, D.C.M., with a luminous wristlet watch in token of their admiration of his valour in the field by which he has won the D.C.M. Mr. Connell (who is a postman attached to the Dublin Office) was with a party of the Royal Field Artillery, in charge of ammunition, when they were shelled by the Germans. His horses were killed, but he gallantly stopped at his post until he got fresh horses and saved the ammunition.

The meeting took place in the Postmen's Office. Mr. H. J. Tipping, Controller of the Dublin Postal District, made the presentation on behalf of the staff, and, in doing so, complimented Mr. Connell on his pluck, and wished that he might be spared to return to his duties after a victorious war. Mr. Sweeney, Inspector-in-Charge of the Postmen Force, and Mr. Dixon, Assistant Inspector, also spoke.



include the Dublin Postal District, the Parcel Office, the Postmens' Branch, the Sorting Office and other contributions from the Postal Staff in Coleraine and the Staff at Tipperary Post Office.

The further we move away from 11th of November 1918 the more contentious acts or symbols of remembrance of the victims of that war seem to become. Motives for acts of remembrance are attributed or claimed by those on either side of the argument who like to brashly declare their particular brand of patriotism. In this year, the centenary of the end of the Great War, it is worth reflecting on the long list of post office subscribers

towards the fund to erect a national war memorial. It would I believe be worthwhile to approach remembrance by giving some consideration to the actions and motives of those who had recent and real reasons to remember the war dead. The subscriptions from postal workers towards a war memorial can't be attributed to a desire to glorify an imperialist catastrophe for humanity. The pennies and shillings that flowed in from post offices around the country were subscribed by men and women who simply wanted to express their remembrance of the sons, brothers and workmates who never returned home.

Table 1 - Confirmed Irish postal workers casualties from The Post Office Rifles.

Forename	Surname	Occupation 1911 Census	Address 1911 Census	Age	Date Of Death
Bernard	Carolan	Postman	Nicholas Street Dundalk	37	30/10/1917
Harry	Cassidy	Postman	Buncrana Co Donegal	34	20/09/1917
Robert	Caulfield	Postman	Lady Lane New Ross Co Wexford	23	09/07/1917
Patrick	Clarke	Postman	Talbot Road Killiney Co Dublin	32	21/05/1916
Patrick	Culloty	Postman	Glanbane Kilfelin Co Kerry	31	28/06/1918
William	Dargan	Postman	Green Lane Maryborough Queen's Co.	28	07/06/1917
Patrick	Flynn	Postman	Domey's Well Co. Tipperary,	20	27/08/1917
John	Forde	Telegraph Boy	New Market on Fergus Co Clare	21	15/09/1916
William F	Kelly	Postman	Rathmore Buildings Cork City	33	24/11/1917
George E.	Kydd	Postman	Abbot Street Belfast	23	20/07/1917
John	Lowe	Postman	20 Mark Street Lurgan	31	30/03/1917
John	McShane	Postman	Dowdallshill Dundalk	36	21/12/1915
James	Moore	Postman	Back Lane Moville Co Donegal	28	14/10/1916
Michael	Murphy	Postman	Chapel St Portarlinton Kings Co.	34	25/07/1918
William	O'Brien	Postman	Barrett St Bagnalstown Co. Carlow	19	30/10/1917
Andrew	O'Neill	Postman	46 Harold Rd Manor Place Dublin.	34	02/06/1917
Patrick	Rahilly	Postman	Murgasty Cottages Tipperary	32	17/09/1916
Robert E	Reid	PO Inspector	15 Princes St Londonderry	43	07/11/1916
Henry	Trollope	Postman	St. Mary's Terrace Dalkey Co. Dublin	26	16/06/1917

# CWU HEALTH INSURANCE GROUP SCHEME



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|  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | <b>Is it through your Group Scheme?</b>         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



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## CWU HA Convoy 2018

The CWU would like to wish the four drivers from An Post and eir the best of luck on their journey to deliver aid to Moldova!



*Joe Mangan and Mick Walshe.*



*Aidan Daly and Paul Murray.*



*Aidan, Jimmy, Pascal and Paul.*



*Joe and Mick load up.*



*CWU HA Convoy with Steve and Willie Mooney (VP).*





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# Branch Secretary Stage 1 Course

This course took place in Union Head Office and commenced on May 22nd. All newly elected Branch Secretaries are required to attend the Stage 1 course, as well as any currently elected Branch Secretary who may not have had the opportunity to attend in the past. Our five-

day course is spread over two weeks and covers the duties of the Branch Secretary, member representation and other work-related issues. This year we had attendees from different organisations which contributed positively to the training. We thank all the group for their participation.



***Pictured Back row l-r: Alan Dempsey (KNIS), Myles Byrne (Admin Managers Branch), Paul Sheehy (Tullamore Postal), Paul Farren (Westport Postal) and Denis Buckley (eir Cork District).***

***Front row l-r: Adam Warren (BT Ireland), Catríona McCarthy (Cork Tels), Noel Hogan (Birr Roscrea Postal), John Ahern (Cork Mails Centre), Sean McDermott (eir Cork District) and Demelza Dooley (Ballinasloe Postal).***



*Demelza Dooley, Ballinasloe Postal*



*Seán McDermott, Cork District*

# Chairperson Training

The Chairperson training course took place soon after conference on June 6th-8th. Again, we had a good number of attendees from across various sectors. All newly elected Chairpersons are required to attend this course, as well as any currently elected

Chairperson who may not have had the opportunity to attend in the past. The course addressed the role of the Chairperson within their branch structure and other relevant modules. Our thanks to all those who attended.



***Pictured Back row l-r: Christy Bridgdale Ennis Postal, Andrew Kenneally South Kerry Postal, Derek Lynch UPS, Matthew Rodgers BT Ireland and Jerry O'Brien Mallow Postal.***  
***Pictured Front row l-r: John Nixon Westport Postal, Peter Smyth Tullamore Postal, Cheryl Lucey Cork Outdoor, Seán O'Donnell Dublin Postal Delivery Branch and Alan O'Keeffe PhoneWatch.***

## Galway Postal Branch Committee Training

The union held a committee training course in Galway for the postal branch committee. A full day of training was held between June 29th & 30th and we hope that the topics covered on the course will assist the branch into the future. Thanks again to all for giving up their time to attend and the union wishes you every success with your branch responsibilities.

### In attendance were:

Pauline Kennedy, Barry Haddock, Nadxeya Berasneva, Tom Walsh, Paul Pender, Michael Shaughnessy, Damien Corcoran, Noel Cooke and Jon Mummery.





# KNIS Committee Training

The Union was pleased to welcome the new KNIS branch committee to head office for training. The course was held on April 18th and covered Equality in the workplace, the role and structure of the Union, representing members on various issues as well as the role of the branch committee.

We will look forward to welcoming the committee back again for further training in the future.

### In attendance were:

Alan Dempsey, Brendan O'Connor, Gerry O'Sullivan, Paul Davy, Joe Cox and John Furlong.

Included in the picture are John Dunleavey and Ivor Reynolds from the Union's Education Committee.



# Portlaoise Postal Branch Committee Training

Committee training was held in the Midlands Park Hotel for the Portlaoise Postal branch committee and we had an excellent turn out on the day. The course covered many topics such as the role of the committee and assisting members. Our thanks to all for making the local arrangements and for the high level of attendance. Best of luck to the committee going forward.

### In attendance were:

Liam Brennan, David Cole, Chris Nestor, John Byrne, David Kelly, Paul Fitzgibbon, Geraldine McManus, Ellen Moore, Dina Considine, Tom Prendergast, Paddy Rafferty, Liam Dowling and Don White.

### THE FOLLOWING ARE THE COURSES REMAINING FOR 2018

#### **Branch Officers' Course September 18th (1 day)**

The course is open to Assistant Secretaries and Vice Chairpersons. The aim of this course is to provide Branch Officers with the necessary skills to carry out the role of a Branch Officer given that they will be required, from time to time, to stand in for either the Branch Secretary or Branch Chairperson.

#### **Treasurers' Course September 19th (1 day)**

This course is open to all newly elected Treasurers who will receive training on how to carry out the duties of Treasurer. Treasurers in addition to their own role will be required to represent members on occasion and will need the skills to do this which will be part of the training. This will all be incorporated into the training.

#### **Equality Representatives September 25th & 26th (2 days)**

The Equality Representative is a support role to the Branch Secretary who can assist with equality related matters. This course is based primarily on the nine grounds of discrimination under employment equality legislation and deals with such matters as work life balance, statutory and non-statutory leave, disability in the workplace etc.

#### **Branch Secretary Stage 2 October 9th, 10th & 11th (3 days)**

This course should be attended by Branch Secretaries who have completed Stage 1 and are in their second or consecutive term as Branch Secretary. This course builds on the experience of the Branch Secretary in dealing with branch matters and work related issues on behalf of their membership.

#### **Advanced Branch Officer October 16th, 17th & 18th (3 days)**

This course is open to Branch Secretaries who have completed the stage 2 course prior to 2018 and have been re-elected to their role. It is also open to Branch Chairpersons who completed the Chairperson training course prior to 2018 and have been re-elected. The course will cover topics such as political economy, communications and other relevant issues.

#### **Committee Courses**

This course is normally 2 half days in duration, namely a half day on a Friday afternoon and a half day on a Saturday morning, the dates of which will be set with Branches as required. All arrangements are agreed with the local committees or where feasible courses are also held in union head office.

*We wish to thank all those who have participated in our training to date and we hope that it will prove beneficial to them in their Union Role. As always, we encourage feedback from Branches on the training that they have received, and we also encourage Branches to contact us with any specific requests for training that they may have, and we will endeavour to meet them.*

## HCL Cork, April 25th

The Union was pleased to deliver training for the HCL Committee in Cork. We had many attendees on the day and covered a variety of topics to assist the branch in their role. We wish the branch every success going forward and hope that the training will prove useful.

#### **In attendance were:**

Aideen O'Shea, Kelvin Kieran, Declan Jones, Christina Cambridge, Aaron McCarthy, Reece Hogan, Nicola Nolan, Lorraine Furlong and Catríona McCarthy.



### Val Kenny Retires

Postal Operative Val Kenny retired on 17th February 2018 after 44 years' service. He worked out of Kilkelly P.O. until 22nd August 2015, when he moved into the new DSU at Ballyhaunis.

Val was joined by his colleagues and friends to celebrate his retirement.

*Pictured l to r: Noel Heneghan, Pat Kelly, Helen Byrne, Noel Fagan (Postmaster Kilkelly P.O.), Val Kenny, Willie Broderick, Michael Connolly, Gerry Plunkett, Tom Fitzpatrick and John Joe Kelly (Manager DSU Ballyhaunis).*

### Joe O'Shaughnessy Retires

*Christy Brigdale, Chairman Ennis Postal Branch, presents the Union Scroll and Pin to Joe O'Shaughnessy on his retirement after 28 years' service. The members of the Branch would like to wish Joe a long, happy and healthy retirement.*



### CWU Members in Solidarity with Lloyd Pharmacy Workers

*CWU members: Sarah Vaughan and Des Kennedy pictured on the picket line in solidarity with workers from Lloyds Pharmacy in Kilbarrack on the day of one of the disputes.*





# Niamh O'Sullivan Wins Silver Medal



*Niamh O'Sullivan being congratulated by her friends and colleagues in the Cork Mails Centre after winning a silver medal in the 800m freestyle swimming event in the 2018 World Gay Games in Paris.  
Thanks to CWU for all your assistance and support.*

## Dublin No 1 Branch Retirements



*Recent early retirees who received their Union Scrolls: Cosmas Molloy, Pat Guiney, John G. O'Neill and Mick O'Toole.*



*Mick O'Toole*



*Pat Guiney*



*Cosmas Molloy*



*Hugh Byrne*



*John G. O'Neill*



*Alan McCabe*



## CWU People



*John Brennan receives his Union Scroll from Ivor Reynolds, marking the occasion of his recent retirement following 48 years of service as a CWU member and working for eir.*



*Pictured receiving their Union Scrolls upon their retirement on 30th June, 2018, are: Paul Moran, eir Managers' Branch Citywest (former Dublin No 1 committee member) retired after 44 years' service. Eddie Ryan eir Managers' Branch (former Dublin No 4 treasurer) Citywest, retired after 42 years' service and Tony McDowell, eir Managers' Branch Citywest, retired after 40 years' service.*



*Paul Moran*



*Eddie Ryan*



*Tony McDowell*



## Galway DSU News



*Paul Kennedy receives a presentation from Galway Postal on his election to the NEC.*



*Perla Molly receives a presentation from Galway Postal on her retirement from Galway DSU after 18 years.*



*Deputy General Secretary, Seán McDonagh, presents the Union Scroll to Gerry Cunningham, Transport Manager (who was based at Galway DSU) at a function to mark his retirement in July 2018. We wish Gerry every happiness in his retirement.*



*The Galway Postal Branch held its Annual Memorial Mass at Galway DSU to remember former colleagues on June 16th. Donations were made to ACT for Meningitis and Pieta House from the Damien Tuohy Memorial Fund. Pictures show fund trustees presenting the cheques on the day.*

# Mallow Postal Retirements



*Pictured from l to r: Michael Cashman (on his last day on the job), along with Tom MacDonald, Paddy Tobin (who also recently retired from An Post Cappoquin), Kay Queally, Billy Connery and Kay Murphy.*



*Paddy Tobin, who retired recently from An Post, Cappoquin, being presented with his Union Scroll by Tom Daly, Secretary Mallow Postal Branch. We wish Paddy well in the future.*



*Michael Cashman, who retired from An Post, Cappoquin, today after 43 years' service, being presented with his Union Scroll by Tom Daly, Secretary Mallow Postal Branch. We wish Michael well in the future.*





### John Joe Kelly Retires

John Joe Kelly, Ballyhaunis DSU retired recently. John Joe was an active member of the branch and held the position of Secretary of the Ballyhaunis Branch before moving to the new Castlerea and District Branch. John Joe with his wife Sara, family and work colleagues. He retired on 21st June 2018. We wish him a happy and healthy retirement and thank him for all his support and service to the Branch.

*Pictured at a function held to mark his retirement John Joe was presented with the Union Scroll by Michael Connolly who thanked him for his 42 years' of service.*



**Pictured l to r: (Back row)** Willie Broderick, Cian Griffin, Noel Heneghan, Val Kenny, Pat Kelly, Tom Fitzpatrick, and David Madden. **(Middle row)** Helen Byrne, Maura Kelly, Amy Conroy, Michael Connolly, Gerry Plunket, Emily Murphy, and Joe Byrne. **(Front row)** Sara Kelly and John Joe Kelly.



### Pat Barry Retires

*Pat Barry, Postal Operative, Tipperary DSU, who recently retired, being presented with the Union Scroll by Jer Harnett, Branch Secretary, Tipperary Postal Branch.*



# Kilkenny postman, Mick, hangs up his satchel after 52 years in the job!

A popular local postman has finally hung up his satchel after 52 years in the service, making him the country's longest-serving postman.

Mick Cahill, originally from Wolfe Tone Street, will be well known to many in Freshford where he has been looking after the post for the last 14 years. He's seen plenty of changes over the years, since he started off as a telegram boy back in 1966.

When he first started off, his route was 5am until 1.30pm. Back then, the job was six days a week. More recently, his route would start at 7am and finish at 3pm, five days a week.

An Post gave Mick a contract extension back in 2016, and now, retiring at 67 is somewhat bittersweet.

"I'll miss the people," he says.

"I wouldn't have minded another year. But they [already] gave me an extension for two years."

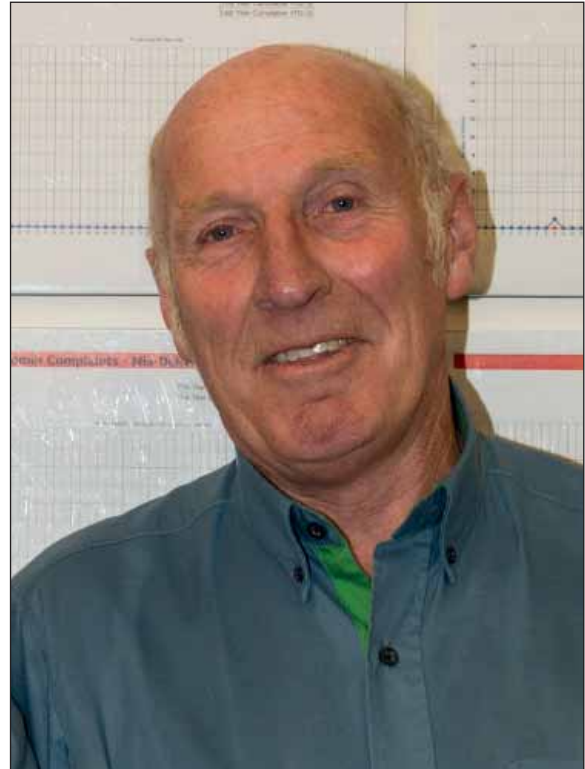
Mick wants to thank his customers and everyone else over the years for their support. He was speaking to the Kilkenny People from Tramore, where he was out for a walk.

Mick said he's not sure 100% what he will do now that he's retired, but is the kind of

person who likes to keep busy. He attends a lot of hurling matches, and has been involved in both O' Loughlin Gaels and Freebooters AFC over the years.

North Kilkenny councillor Michael McCarthy says Mick will be missed by many in the community in Freshford.

"He will be a huge loss to the area - he was very popular and knew everyone," he said. "We wish him all the best."



*Popular Mick Cahill*



## Ger O'Brien Retires

*Ger O'Brien, who retired earlier this year from Cahir DSO, is pictured here with some of his colleagues and friends at his retirement party. Ger had been with An Post since 1982 and we wish him a long and happy retirement.*

## Fundraiser for Hugh Mannion



Hugh Mannion is a serving COT1 in air based in Athlone. Hugh has been paralysed from the waist down as a result of a workplace accident which occurred last October while working on storm repairs. His colleagues,

both present and retired, have decided to run a fundraiser to show him their support and assist with his needs.

Branches can donate by sending donations to Mick Walshe, Branch Secretary, Galway District Branch.

## Retirements from An Post Castlerea DSU



*Thomas Flannery An Post Castlerea DSU, pictured receiving his pin and Union Scroll from John Bligh, CWU Chairman Ballyhaunis/Castlerea branch, on the occasion of his recent retirement after 41 years' Service in An Post.*




*Leo Gilligan receiving his pin and Union Scroll from John Bligh, CWU Chairman Ballyhaunis/Castlerea, the occasion of his recent retirement after 18 years' service to An Post. We wish both our colleagues health and happiness!*

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	Loss of Speech	€100,000*	€70,000	€35,000
	Loss of Hearing	up to €100,000*	up to €70,000	up to €35,000
	Other Permanent Disabilities (continental scale)	up to €100,000*	up to €70,000	up to €35,000
	Hospitalisation (payable after 24 hours for up to 26 weeks)	€600 per week	€300 per week	€150 per week
	Fracture to Arm (a full break of humerus, radius, ulna or wrist)	€1500*	€750	€375
	Fracture to Leg (a full break of femur, patella, tibia, fibula or ankle)	€3,000*	€1,500	€750
	Burns covering 27% or more of the body	€12,000*	€6,000	€3,000
	Burns covering 18% to 27% of the body	€10,000*	€5,000	€2,500
	Burns covering 9% to 18% of the body	€8,000*	€4,000	€2,000
	Burns covering 4.5% to 9% of the body	€4,000*	€2,000	€1,000
	Temporary Total Disablement (payable after 26 weeks for up to 2 years, or for back and/or neck injuries, including whiplash, benefit is payable after 52 weeks) this benefit is not operative if retired or unemployed.	€300 per week	€300 per week	Nil

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## Sligo District Retirements



*Michael Flannery (eir) receives his Union Scroll from Pascal Connolly, following 40 years' service.*



*Pascal Connolly, NEC, presenting John Quinn, former Sligo District Branch Secretary, with a clock to mark his retirement from eir. John was the Branch Secretary for the Sligo District Branch and everyone in CWU wishes John a long and healthy retirement and best wishes for the future.*



*Osmund Heraghty (eir) receives his Union Scroll from Pascal Connolly.*



*William McMahon (eir) receives his Union Scroll from Pascal Connolly.*



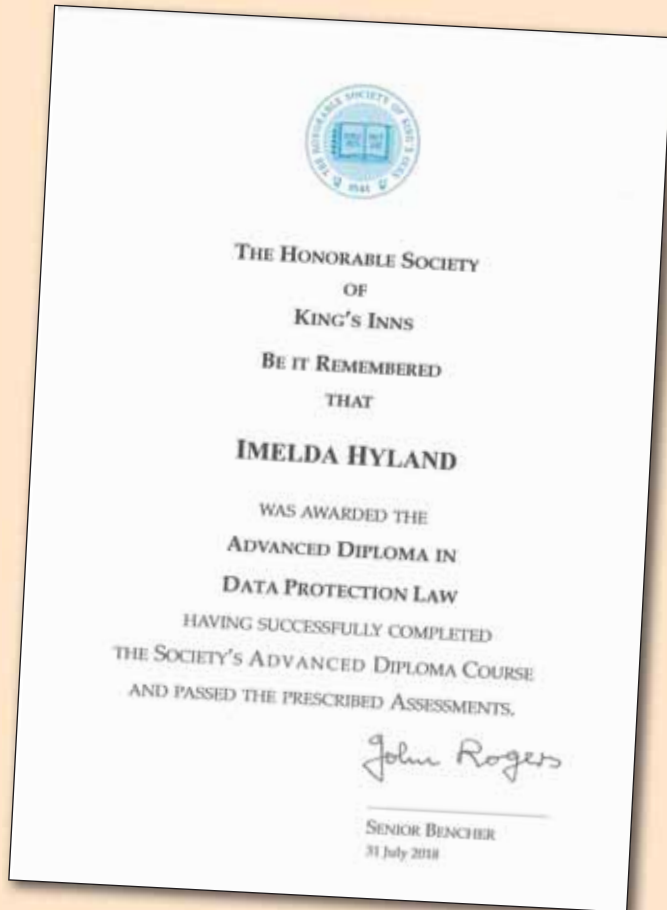
*Martin McGarry (eir) receives his Union Scroll from Pascal Connolly.*



*Francie Kerins (eir) receives his Union Scroll from Pascal Connolly, following 38 years' service.*

### Congratulations to Imelda!

CWU sends congratulations to Imelda Hyland on receiving her Advanced Diploma in Data Protection Law.



### Sam is in good hands!

### 4 in a Row for SUPER DUBS!!



*Imelda and Lorraine, Union HQ, with the Sam Maguire Cup, celebrating after the final.*

### John McCarthy Retires



*John Mc Carthy, Branch Secretary Clonmel Postal Branch pictured with his colleagues from Clonmel DSU at a function to celebrate his retirement. John will be sorely missed by all in the CWU and we thank him for the service he has given to the union during his time. We wish him a very long and happy retirement.*



## Mullingar DSU. Local events in memory of deceased members



The 2018 “Eamon Boyle Memorial Pitch & Putt An Post Memorial Cup” in honour of our dear departed friend Eamon Boyle RIP. Eamon was our comrade for many years in An Post Mullingar. Our annual tournament which was played in Collinstown Pitch & Putt Club 10th August 2018. Players from the Boyle family and present and retired staff had a great day and the weather was fantastic. Many thanks to Ena Clinton for the refreshments afterwards. Ger O'Connor won this year's event with Joe O'Connor runner up and many other prize winners. Ger O'Connor said a few words and was thrilled to win this event after all the Champions and in honour of a great friend, Bernie thanked all who participated and thanked Martin Little and Pat Rickard for continuing to keep Eamon in our thoughts.

There was a great turnout this year by members of Mullingar Delivery Services Unit of An Post and friends to commemorate our former friend and work colleague Shane O'Connor (RIP). This wonderful event was hosted by his friends and former co-workers Mark “Ernie” Murray & Trevor “Trev” Thompson. They have now honoured Shane through this event nine times with the winners as follows 2010-2013 Gordon Ward, 2014-2016 Trevor Thompson, 2017 Martin O'Connor & 2018 Dave Whelehan. Trevor and Mark can take a bow for their hard and dedicated work over the years.

### RESULT:

Winner: Dave Whelehan

Runner Up: Alan Rickard

3rd Place: Mikey Kiernan



*Eamon Boyle Memorial Pitch & Putt 2018. Winner - Gerry O'Connor with Bernie Boyle.*



*Luke O'Connor (Shane's son) presents Dave Whelehan with the Cup*



### Pat Tobin RIP

It was with great sadness we learned of the death of our friend and former colleague Pat Tobin RIP on Saturday 28/10/17. Pat was a great friend to all that got to know him from his first day starting with the P&T to the day of his early retirement from Eircom. Pat was a great CWU activist during this period. He was section secretary in Newcastle West & also held the position of Branch Treasurer in the Limerick Branch for numerous years. *Pat arranged for CWU*



*Delegation's to address Limerick County Council and the Dail Communications committee on Regulatory issues.* A man who rarely raised his voice at meetings but when he did it was time to take notice. Pat first job was in exchange construction moving to fitting and finally moving to the stores department where he retired from. Pat's first love was always his wife & family but he also loved sport nothing more than supporting Munster in rugby, Limerick FC in soccer

and his beloved Newcastle West in both codes. He also liked nothing better than having a small wager on a round of golf. Even though he travelled the world on holidays and visiting family there was one place he loved above all and that was Ballybunion. He loved to walk the shore line or play in the sand with his grandchildren. It was here the family meet yearly without fail with Pat being the main joker. Friend, we miss you every day. To his wife Bernie daughters

Edel, Sahra, Emier, sons Eric and Shane, partners, grandchildren, brothers, sisters extended family and friends we express our sympathy.

*(Life is an ocean, Love is a boat, In troubled water you kept us afloat;*

*When we started the voyage, There was just me and you, Now gather round us, We have our own crew)*

Ar dheis de go raibh anim

### Paddy Morris RIP

The CWU is saddened to learn of the passing of Paddy Morris pictured in the photo. Our deepest condolences to his family at this time. May he rest in peace.

Paddy Morris was born and raised in Ballybough on 3rd October 1928. He worked with horses for most of his early years and took up a job driving the mail delivery vans for the P&T where he worked with a number of horses and drove vans with two horses until they were eventually phased out in the 1950s.

The photograph taken by the famous photographer Colman Doyle who worked in the Irish Press was published on the front page to mark the occasion of the last horse drawn mail van leaving the P&T.

Paddy later left the P&T and went on to work for the Merchants Warehousing Company in the Dublin docks. Paddy's son John later became a postman until his retirement a number of years ago.

He always had a story to tell about his time in the P&T, the horses and people he worked with and truly enjoyed his time there. He spoke of the horses like

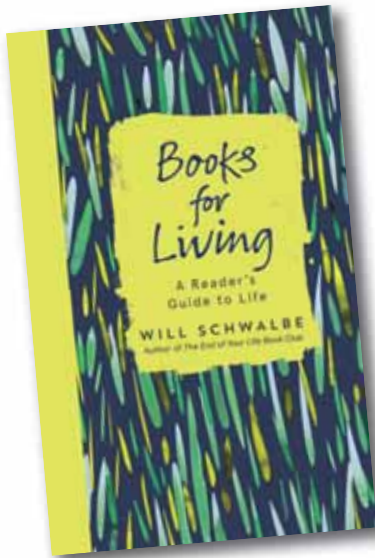
they were his colleagues and friends.

Paddy passed away on Wednesday 1st, August 2018. He will be sadly missed by his children, John, Ann and Pat and his grandchildren, neighbours and friends.





# Book Review by Adrienne Power



## BOOKS FOR LIVING - A READER'S GUIDE TO LIFE

Author: Will Schwalbe

270 pages, 1st published 2017

Price €13.99

Will Schwalbe, a journalist and publisher, is an advocate for the power of books. In this wonderful volume he lists over 27 books that have helped him to remember, realise something or see life differently.

In his introduction, he talks about the conduit of reading and how it helped a grandmother (after reading *"The Hunger Games"* by Suzanne Collins) have something in common with her grandson. This grew into a shared interest which sparked many discussions on lots of subjects including war, poverty, privacy and hosts of other topics.

One of the books he refers to is the popular thriller *"Girl on a Train"* by Paula Hawkins which turns into an important lesson about who to trust on Facebook in how Friends behave rather than how they appear.

Another book he highlights is *"Rebecca"* by Daphne du Maurier which is set in a gothic mansion called Manderley, oozing with the ghostly presence of Maxim's first wife "Rebecca". It is a tale of insecurity and murder. The writer related this book to a good friend who alienated himself because of his fondness for gossiping. The writer ended up distancing himself from this friend like a lot of other people. Will Schwalbe was

sorry that electronic communication cannot convey tone and that he did not realise how bad things had become for this friend until it was too late.

He talks about books saving lives and connects this to *"Reading Lolita in Tehran"* by Azar Nafisi. He mentions a student whose life was saved by this book in his backpack when a deranged person started shooting in the university. The book itself is a sad story of the plight of women in Iran being persecuted, jailed, tortured, denied education and forced to marry. How one book can make a difference – reform and stop bullets! Books are freedom for a lot of people.

*"Books help us find humanity and live humanely in a world of greed, envy and agitation"*, states Schwalbe.

Later in the book we come across *"Gifts of the Sea"* by Anne Morrow Lindbergh, widow of the famous aviator Charles Lindbergh and mother of the baby who was notoriously kidnapped and murdered in 1932. This is a quiet book of reflections after she spent time at the Florida seashore. Each chapter takes inspiration from different shells found on the beach. She gives advice on finding balance in life covering subjects like marriage, work, love, independence and how we manage time. Most importantly, how to remain whole with the distractions of life.

*"There is so much to consider in this collection of book musings. It is one you will pick up again and again from your shelves like an old friend!"*





# Book Review by Adrienne Power



## AN UNWANTED GUEST

Author: Shari Lapena

292 Pages – Large Format, 1st Published 2018

Price €15.99

A group of people on a weekend away get caught in a snowstorm. They are heading to a boutique hotel, called Mitchell's Inn which is in the Catskill Mountains.

Lauren and Ian stop to pick up Gwen and Riley whose Fiat ended up in a ditch. Immediately, Lauren realises there is something off about Riley. We find out Riley is a War Correspondent who has seen too many wars and now suffers with anxiety issues.

On the first night all the guests gather for cocktails and introduce themselves. The scene is set, and everyone is watchful of everyone else, wondering what their stories are. Along with the four who met up just before arriving at the Inn, there is an attorney on his own, an older embittered married couple, another younger glamorous couple and a woman writer. The older couple are struggling in their marriage finding life hard with the

endless pressures of work, finance and family and just needing a short breakaway with time for themselves. A father and son are running the hotel as most of the staff could not get there because of the storm. The Inn is completely cut off in where it is located without even Wi-Fi access, which makes things very interesting. Dana Hart, one of the guests, is found dead at the bottom of the grand staircase early next morning. So, begins an entertaining whodunit.

Shari Lapena is a big fan of the one and only Agatha Christie and you can see the influences in this story. Old fashioned and a cosy mystery. Shari Lapena is Canadian and worked as a lawyer and English Teacher before becoming a writer. Her first mystery was received with great acclaim – “*The Couple Next Door*”.

I found this book gripping from the opening line. It's a wonderful premise of people stuck in a hotel during a storm cut off from everything else, wrestling with their own lives and secrets.

It kept me guessing to the final page!

*“I found this book gripping from the opening line!”*



*Ralph Waldo Emerson*



## General Data Protection Regulations

### Important information for our members






GDPR came into effect on the 25th May 2018 and replaced the Data Protection Acts in Ireland.

### What does it mean?

GDPR very significantly increases the obligations and responsibilities for organisations and businesses in how they collect, use and protect personal data. Organisations must be fully transparent about how data is used and safeguarded and be able to demonstrate accountability for data processing activities.

Under GDPR individuals have greater control over their personal data and how it is processed. The Communications Workers' Union (CWU) takes the privacy and protection of our members personal data seriously. The CWU privacy policy is available to view on our website [www.cwu.ie](http://www.cwu.ie).

### Under GDPR you have the right to:

-  Access the personal data held on you
-  Access details about how your personal data is processed
-  The right to have data corrected / erased
-  The right to object to the processing of your personal data in certain circumstances i.e. direct mailing, emails, etc
-  The right to restrict the processing of your personal data.

### Data Protection Contacts

Our Data Protection Officer is Imelda Wall and can be contacted by email on [privacy@cwu.ie](mailto:privacy@cwu.ie) or in writing to:

**Imelda Wall**  
**Data Protection Officer**  
**Communications Workers' Union**  
**William Norton House**  
**575 North Circular Road**  
**Dublin 1**

The CWU will endeavour to address any data related concerns however, you can also contact the Data Protection Commissioner at:

**Office Of the Data Protection Commissioner**  
**21 Fitzwilliam Square**  
**Dublin 2**  
**LoCall: 1890 252 231**  
**Email: [info@dataprotection.ie](mailto:info@dataprotection.ie)**  
**[www.dataprotection.ie](http://www.dataprotection.ie)**