



CONNECT

SUMMER 2023 VOL: 25 NO.1

CWU – An Post Transformation Agreement 2023 – 2026



CWU Postal Branch Secretaries
meet to discuss the challenges



CONNECT

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Editorial

A message from your General Secretary

Colleagues,

The work of the CWU organisation and representatives has been a hive of activity across all aspects of the Unions business. In tandem with engaging with members at the Annual General Meetings, we have been working hard at all levels to improve our organisation, service to members, enhancing and protecting conditions of employment. This is against the backdrop of the waves of worldwide redundancy announcements across the Tech sector which have led to a growing understanding that people working in this sector are just as vulnerable to the whims of their employers as in other sectors. Thousands of workers have learned that, despite their skills, they can find themselves facing compulsory redundancies en masse.

Critically, workers in this sector are facing into complex scenarios without the benefits of the collective strength of a Union. Issues such as visas, redundancy during maternity leave, among others, have to be confronted on an individual basis. While these redundancies will eventually pass, for the many thousands of workers who will survive the cuts, the structural vulnerability of work without a Union will remain. Therefore, now is the time for workers in the Tech sector to come together and build strength by forming a Union.

Recognising that Tech workers have many challenges that are unique to their sector, the CWU launched at its Seminar in April **DATA – the Digital and Techworker Alliance** – a space within the CWU for those who are increasingly realising that there is value in collective power and strength in the Union. Members are invited to explore DATA through our various platforms and more details on this can be found later in this issue.

The key component in our *Shaping the Future Union* strategy is to develop and grow the membership base, which places organising top of the agenda, with a strong focus on recruitment, retention and rebuilding of our organisation at every level. At the CWU Seminar held in the Tower Hotel, Waterford, attended by nearly 200 activists, the General Secretary of the ICTU, Owen Reidy, gave a comprehensive overview of the challenges facing the trade union movement and the work of Congress at national and international level. Delegates were also put through their paces through active participation in workshops, to equip activists and workers with the necessary tools to build power in the workplace. Detailed presentations were made in respect of Finance, Communications and Branch Rationalisation.

Finance

While the CWU is relatively financially healthy, there is a downward trajectory in membership with a corresponding decline in income. For a number of years we have relied on our investments plugging the gap. The reality is this is not a sustainable model which is underlined in the significant loss in investments in 2022 arising from the energy crises as a consequence of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine. Therefore control of costs is essential to maintain financial stability and we are making good progress to having the necessary controls in place in all areas. One of the major areas of expenditure overrun is the Sickness Benefit Scheme. The changes we have made as advised separately to you, enables us to maintain the support and to continue to provide financial assistance for members on reduced pay.

Communications

As stated above, the Union launched its new DATA website and related social media at the recent Seminar. This forms part of the overall Communications Strategy that has been developed in tandem with the *Shaping the Future Union* strategy. Feedback from members has been utilised to improve our online presence, both in regard to the CWU website and our social media platforms – Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Through the Communications Strategy, the Union intends to make better use of digital communications to keep members updated with real time information on issues of concern, as well as promoting the benefits of Union membership, which is linked to the Organising Strategy to grow our overall membership. CWU Headquarters is always interested in hearing from our members with regard to our communications, if there are ways we can improve our offering, or if members have relevant content that they would like to submit for publication, this can be done by emailing communications@cwu.ie



Branch Rationalisation

We have also undertaken a review of our branch structures facing up to the key challenges of declining membership numbers and smaller branches, but prioritising the focus on maintaining and improving service to members in the future. Our existing structures have been in place for some time and we need to adapt to changes in the membership profile to improve service to members, while maintaining important local

engagement and succession planning. The Deputy General Secretary, Ian McArdle, comprehensively responded to the positive submissions from Branches, outlining at our Seminar next steps.

Industrial Relations Front

Outside of progress on improving our organisation, the CWU has progressed a wide range of issues on behalf of members which has resulted in very good agreements across a number of companies. While these are outlined in more detail elsewhere, I will reference the key areas.



*Seán McDonagh
General Secretary,
CWU*

eComms

Agreement to introduce over 50 new Apprentices into openeir is welcome, as it is a positive development building on the programme first introduced in 2011 providing members with competitive financial rewards and career progression. The 25% increase in the NRT payment for former Apprentices is a positive response to the concerns raised at AGMs. In March, approximately 90% of members received their bonus, utilising the €1,000 tax efficient voucher. The final module of the three years pay agreement concludes with a 2% increase in pay from the 1st July 2023. However, it is most disappointing that eir failed to respond positively to our request to recognise the financial impact inflation is having on members, notwithstanding increases in prices and the rewards for NJJ. It will fall to the Union to secure, through discussion early in 2024, increases in pay and pension that address the gap for staff.

At KN/Circet we are currently in discussions for an increase in pay for members.

Postal/Courier

Over the last 18 months the CWU has engaged intensively with senior An Post management on the implementation of agreed pay increases which have delivered a 5% pay increase in two instalments. The Union also secured a cumulative 10.4% pensions increase for An Post staff and pensioners. The final elements of these pension increases await approval from the Ministers for Communications and for Expenditure and Reform. Our positive engagement with the Company has resulted in further agreement on measures necessary to support the Company's Transformation Programme that will help underpin the commercial viability and sustainability of the Company's operations for the long

term. As a result, members in An Post will share the benefits for cooperation with the implementation of the agreed changes. This will include further pay increases of 5% for delivery staff and 3% for clerical staff, and an improved performance pay structure for managerial grades. In addition, all 9,000 CWU members at An Post will receive a €750 tax free voucher. I am very pleased the Executive Council of the CWU unanimously ratified the agreement reached on these measures.

Private Companies

Earlier this year, CWU Officials and the PhoneWatch Branch successfully secured a pay agreement for 12 months with an increase of 4.5% for all graded staff. A three year pay agreement was negotiated last year for our members in American Airlines. The second phase of this agreement provides for a pay increase of inflation + 1.5%, members can expect this in the coming weeks.

Meanwhile, a 5% one year pay increase was unanimously accepted by our members in UPS back in April. The pay agreement was achieved in the context of the company's announcement that they would be implementing a number of cost cutting measures, including a small number of enhanced voluntary redundancies, as a result of declining parcel volumes. In DPD, having rejected an initial 6% two year pay deal, members in Athlone voted to accept an enhanced 8% pay offer back in December. The agreement included €2,500 in tax free vouchers across the term of the agreement in acknowledgement of rising inflation.

Ballots in Printpost and An Post Commerce Solutions (Billpost) were accepted.

In addition, our Vodafone Retail members achieved a 16% increase in their pay as well as a cost-of-living voucher for €500

Equality & Diversity

I am pleased to report on the significant policy agreements that have been achieved in the area of Diversity and Equality which will enhance our members' working lives in many ways. For example, we have been campaigning hard to improve working conditions for our female members and have secured recognition of menopause as an occupational health issue in both An Post and eir. Recently the CWU, in association with An Post, agreed a menopause support policy and toolkit. This is being implemented through one-hour in-person talks at many An Post sites throughout June.

We have a long-standing agreement in eir around menopause as a workplace issue so that our members can raise concerns in a confidential manner. We have also worked with eir on fertility, surrogacy and pregnancy loss policies, which we believe have made a real difference in working lives.

The CWU also secured policies on paid domestic violence leave in advance of legislation being

implemented and for that matter our policies go over and above the provisions enacted.

Our work with Breast Cancer Ireland, has led to various "lunch and learn" sessions being held around the country in An Post and I am pleased to advise that these are now also being rolled out in eir starting in Churchfield. On International Men's Day, the CWU worked with An Post to raise awareness of prostate care and we will continue this work into the future.

Members will be aware that we have been working closely with AsIAm – the national autism awareness charity – as well as See Change, Ireland's organisation to ending mental health stigma. We have also commenced work on new LGBTQ+ initiatives.

Our Diversity and Equality agenda is very broad so that we can ensure our members can participate in a positive and equal work environment. We acknowledge the role of UNI Equal Opportunities in supporting our work which has proven to be very valuable to us. All our work is supplemented by extensive equality training which has been mainstreamed into all our Representatives' training courses. As always, we encourage feedback and suggestion from our membership towards our equality agenda.

Pensioners

The CWU has secured increases in pensionable pay over and above those in the current pension agreements with eir and An Post. The recent Ministerial approval for payment of the agreed 3% increase for eir pensioners, while welcome, was subject to a lengthy delay. Equally, at An Post, within a relatively short timeframe we have secured a cumulative 10.4% increase to pensionable pay, with 2% paid to pensioners and the remainder awaiting Ministerial approval. To expedite the payments to pensioners, we have sought the assistance of ICTU to raise the delay specifically with An Post and to seek to address the underlying problem across all of the semi state companies.

All of the above is testimony of the good work of the Union, Officials with the sterling support of our activists. I value your support and input in progressing the interests of all members and believe the outcomes we have achieved together demonstrates the value of being in a Union.

Finally, I wish to pay tribute to our colleagues in Mandate for their perseverance on behalf of the Debenham workers resulting in a very successful outcome in a test case at the WRC. We have detailed the significance of this in an article penned by Coleen Cleary in this edition of **Connect**.





Letter to the Editor

Above and Beyond the call of duty!



Dear Editor,

I would like to tell you about an experience I had with your members in An Post recently and how extremely helpful a number of staff were – going over, above and beyond their work, their duty and any expectation I had of a successful outcome to my request.

My grandfather's 1916 & 1922 war medals were posted to me from England a few weeks ago; these I planned to wear for both the Garden of Remembrance and GPO commemorations this Easter.

I got a notification from An Post on 6th April (i.e. Holy Thursday) that there was €83.57 owed in fees, import duty and VAT, and to pay same before the envelope could be delivered to me. I paid same



in Post Office in Artane Castle, they could not tell me when I would receive package.

I phoned An Post on 01 705 7600, and was advised that the package could be with Customs for 10 days or so before being released for delivery.

I went up to my local sorting office / delivery unit on Griffith Ave, Whitehall and explained my dilemma.

A man, David Newman, offered to try to help me but held out no great hope that this could be achieved on Good Friday in time for Garden of Remembrance Service on Holy Saturday.

I am happy to report that 30 hours later, on Good Friday, he handed me the package with said medals. I believe numerous people, in numerous depots/offices/units were involved in this endeavour but I would like to thank David himself, Brian Page, Brian Supple, Shane Hughes, Aideen Foley and Phil Grey, people I never met, but who went out of their way to ensure I had the medals for the Easter Celebrations.

I would like to exalt the goodness and decency of our local Postmen, Postal Workers etc and would be happy to talk to you re same if you wish. David Newman has pictures of these medals being received in Whitehall Office and me wearing them at both Garden of Remembrance and GPO commemorations services, and I give my permission for you to publish them in your workers' magazine – David can tell you the story better than me and can tell you all of the people involved.

I have written to Marion Joyce, Management in GPO about this story and I hope these workers can be formally thanked and appreciated.

Please be in touch anytime,

Yours sincerely,
Mary Llewellyn





CWU SEMINAR

Organising is about building
a high-participation Union
High participation is a
pre-requisite to **Power**



Seán addresses CWU Seminar



Laura McKenna explains to Delegates about our Organising Strategy



*Diarmuid O'Connell,
Industrial Organiser CWU*

As part of the “Shaping the Future Union” Strategy, CWU Organising Training was rolled out to the National Executive Council and all National Officers at the end of last year.

The new strategy places Organising at the centre of the Union and, as part of that process, a condensed version of the training was presented to delegates at our Seminar which was held in Waterford in April.

The training highlights the fundamental conflict of interest that exists between employers and workers, and equips workers with the tools to build power in their workplace through union organising. It also includes a module on political economy, a key part of the training, as it gives workers a wider lens to understand

the broader political, cultural and financial factors that influence the world of work.

An organising approach emphasises the importance of the high participation of rank-and-file members in their union as a pre-requisite to power. In this spirit, the presentation at the Seminar facilitated two breakout sessions for delegates to discuss aspects of organising in their own workplaces.

There was excellent engagement throughout the sessions and the exercise was extremely well received. There were also a number of requests from Branches for the training to be rolled out locally, which bodes well as we embed an organising ethos throughout the CWU.



*John Clarke (National Officer)
and Pat Kenny (Staff-side Secretary)*



*Fionnuala Ní Bhrógain
(National Officer)*

CWU Seminar Waterford



Deputy General Secretary Ian McArdle, Vice-President Frank Donohoe, President Ivor Reynolds, General Secretary Seán McDonagh and Jason Caulfield NEC.



Bart Nevin, Jonathan Donnelly & Pat Delaney



Jason, Anthony (Penny) Horan & Seán.



Tara Ravenhill



Adetokunbo Abidoye



Neil Quinn



Breda Galvin



John Tansey



Alanna Cotter & Donna Looney



Mike Boland & Donal O'Driscoll



Owen Reidy, General Secretary ICTU and Ken Colgan.



Deputy General Secretary, Ian, addresses Delegates



Jason, Peter O'Dwyer and Seán.



Carol Scheffer launches the DATA website.



Willie Mooney



Barney Foley passionately addresses Delegates.



Shane Murphy



Ciaran Reilly & Cormac O'Dalaigh



Norita Dawson & Elaine Cockburn



Barry Keogh

8 weeks pay award in test case for 750 Debenhams workers for failure to inform and consult in the WRC



The recent decision of the WRC provides useful insights and clarifications into the collective redundancy obligations for employers that arise under the Protection of Employment Act 1977 (“the 1977 Act”), which unions should be alert to when dealing with collective redundancy situations.

Background

The background to this case is well traversed when at the commencement of the Covid pandemic in 2020, Debenhams Retail (Ireland) limited announced it was closing its stores in Ireland. It became quickly apparent that in addition to the closure of the shops and a pending liquidation, that the employer would not be honouring enhanced redundancy packages for long serving staff, which resulted in extended industrial action at the Debenhams premises.

The Law

Section 9 of the Act requires an employer to consult with representatives in “good time” and at least 30 days before the issuing of notice of termination with employees’ representatives. Section 10 of the Act provides that employers must also supply representatives with “relevant information” during the consultation process, to avoid and minimise the effect of any redundancies. A breach of either section may result in an award by the WRC of 4 weeks’ pay for each affected employee.

WRC Complaint

Mandate issued proceedings against 2 respondents, Debenhams Retail (Ireland) Limited and Debenhams Retail (Ireland) Limited in Liquidation as separate respondents, alleging contravention of sections 9 and 10 of the Act, representing 4 claims on behalf of each member. This was litigated on the basis of one main test case together with the logistical feat of lodging over 750 individual claims on behalf of members in the WRC.

Key Decision

The decision represent a detailed analysis of Irish and European law reflecting the legal submissions submitted and exchanged in the course of the hearing, which found that Debenhams as the employer had failed to comply with their consultation obligations under section 9 and 10 of the Act and awarded 8 weeks’ pay for the employee, which will be applied to the 750 claims and ultimately paid out by the liquidator.

■ Dual Respondents - Debenhams Retail (Ireland) Limited and Debenhams Retail (Ireland) Limited in Liquidation?

The adjudicator found that the legal personality of the employer did not change when the liquidator was appointed and found that there were only 2 valid complaints against one respondent, Debenhams Retail (Ireland) Limited only.

■ Duty to Consult

Mandate argued that Debenhams had not consulted with them in good time and that, while a consultation process was commenced following the appointment of the liquidators on 17 April 2020, they should have consulted earlier when it was clear that the UK entity of Debenhams indicated it was no longer in a position to fund the Irish operations. The adjudicator found that the key economic and strategic decision was in fact made on 8 April 2020 and that this was the relevant date from when consultation should have started and that the delay until 17 April 2020 was material in narrowing potential options to reduce and mitigate the consequences of the intended collective redundancies. The WRC also found the suggestion that the unavailability of all relevant information was not an acceptable reason to delay the commencement of the consultation.

Duty to Inform

In the course of the consultation process there was a substantive exchange of correspondence between Mandate and the liquidator, seeking information including details of the profit of the stores, ownership of stock, details of the online business and landlord lease arrangements etc. A detailed paper trail was documented raising and responding to the information sought and received. The adjudicator found that while the employer does not have to provide all information requested, it must provide all relevant information requested. It was found that the relevant information sought was not provided, which frustrated the union’s capacity to make constructive proposals. The WRC concluded that the process was not conducted in a meaningful way.

Key Takeaway

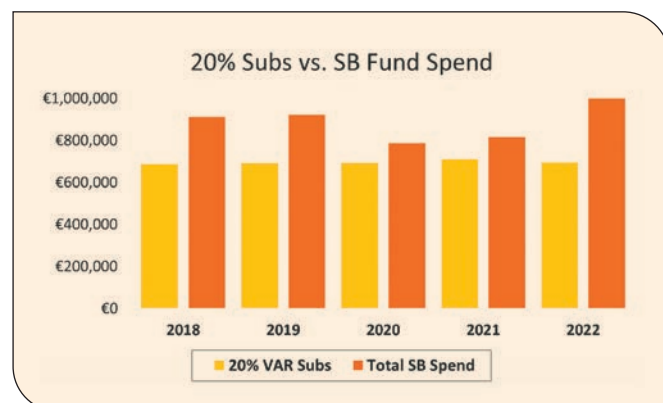
It certainly appears that this decision sets a higher standard for information and consultation obligations and strengthens the obligation on employers to furnish unions/representatives with all relevant information as soon as is possible and not just 30 days before the first dismissal. While employment class actions are not as common in Ireland as they are in other jurisdiction, this demonstrates how feasible they are and that success can be achieved for many on the basis of one test case.

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Social Benefit Fund – Sickness Benefit Scheme

As outlined in GS Circular 09-23 and explained at the recent CWU Seminar, the Social Benefit Fund has returned a cumulative deficit of €1,137,837 in the past five years, reaching its highest level recorded at year end 2022 of €303,191. The table below highlights the deficit between the 20% of variable subs paid into the Social Benefit Fund and the payments (spend) made from the Fund to eligible members.



Following the advice of Fóla Partners and the Union's auditors – Dermot O'Malley & Co. – an extensive analysis of options available to address the issue of overspend on the Sickness Benefit Scheme was conducted to identify a payment calculation option which would address the deficit issue, while continuing to provide financial assistance to eligible members (i.e. Scale A, B & C members paying subs of 1% Basic Pay through deduction at source). The Finance Committee reviewed all of this information before coming to a decision on the most appropriate course of action, making a recommendation to the National Executive Council, which was adopted at its meeting in April.

Bearing in mind the evaluation from the Fóla review that "there is no real scope to curtail expenditure without significant changes to the benefits", the option recommended by the Finance Committee is to change the method of calculating payments from a percentage of basic pay to a flat weekly rate, commencing on Friday

2nd June 2023. A summary comparison of the change is outlined in **Table A** below:

The reasons for proposing implementation of the changes outlined above are:

1. It provides an equitable and predictable level of benefit to members.
2. It will allow the Union to prepare forecasts and budget for expenditure on the Social Benefit Fund, which is good fiscal practice.
3. It can assist in ensuring that the Social Benefit Fund remains a viable benefit for members into the future.
4. It addresses the continued and ongoing deficits, which are a breach of the CWU Rules and the NECs requirement as the governing body to uphold these.
5. It reduces the administrative costs associated with payment.
6. It makes arrears/overpayments simple to calculate.

There is provision in the CWU Rules and Constitution for the NEC to make changes to the payment of benefits from the Social Benefit Fund:

Rule 10.1.8

In the event of severe financial strain on the Social Benefit Fund due to civil disorders, an unforeseen level of claims or unforeseen disasters, the Finance Committee, subject to the sanction of the National Executive Council, has the power to limit or defer any or all of the benefits specified under the rule"

In deciding on the above approach to calculating Sickness Benefit payments, the NEC is acutely aware of the effect that the current global economic downturn is having on our members; however, it is nonetheless crucial that the Union acts now to ensure the long-term viability of the Social Benefit Fund, and in particular the Sickness Benefit Scheme, by addressing this deficit issue without any further delay.

Table A

PREVIOUS METHOD	NEW METHOD
Payment calculated on % of basic pay	Payment calculated using flat weekly rate
1-4 months up to 70% of pay	€120/week for full-time (>30-37.5hrs)
5-8 months up to 65% of pay	€80/week for part-time (>23-30hrs)
9-12 months up to 60% of pay	€40/week for part-time (up to 23hrs)
Payment for 12-months	Payment for 12-months
Provision to apply to NEC for extension	Provision to apply to NEC for extension
Not possible for CWUHQ to budget	Budgets & forecasts possible
Payments fluctuate depending on pay	Provides certainty for member

CWU launches DATA – the Digital & Techworker Alliance – at Seminar in Waterford



As part of the “*Shaping the Future Union*” strategy, we previously commissioned research into the tech sector. This research informed our direction and led to our working with CODE-CWA (Communications Workers of America) and unions across Europe including UTAW-CWU (UK), Unite, Verdi (Germany) and Syndicom (Switzerland). And, as an affiliate of UNI Global Union, the CWU is a long-standing member of the Alphabet Alliance (Google) and the Amazon Alliance.

People working in the Digital and Tech sector have very diverse roles, from programming to content moderation and from warehousing to sales. What is clear is that tech workers have a culture unique to themselves and a language that goes with it. The recent wave of layoffs across the sector has led to a growing understanding that people working in the tech sector are just as vulnerable to the whims of their employers as in other sectors. To reach these workers, and speak that language, we have launched a standalone identity,

within the CWU.

DATA – the Digital and Techworker Alliance – a section of the CWU designed for tech workers, will provide a space for those who are increasingly realising that there is value in collective power and strength in the Union.

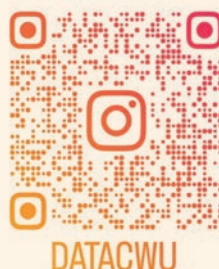
Integrated Communications Strategy

Recognising the diverse roles of the Digital and Tech sector, it is necessary to build a communications strategy to suit the needs of this population.

Following extensive research and development, the online presence of **DATA**-CWU reinforces the CWU as the premier union for digital and tech workers. The branding is designed to be both contemporary but at the same time familiar.

Launched at our Seminar in Waterford, the message is one of solidarity – that tech workers are part of the wider CWU community.

Members are invited to support **DATA**-CWU by simply scanning the QR codes below to follow on social media or by visiting the website at www.datacwu.ie or on Twitter at @DATACWU



PENSION INCREASES

Secured by the CWU – Delayed by Government



In the past year, the increases in pensionable pay secured by the CWU, which subsequently apply to pensioners, have encountered unacceptable and unnecessary delays in securing Ministerial approval.

Pensioners in both the **An Post** Superannuation Scheme and the **eircom** Superannuation scheme have been impacted by the delay in approval/payment. The schemes are financially healthy and in surplus that enables them to meet the **Pension Authority's Minimum Funding Standard (M.F.S.)**. In fact, both are moving towards self-sufficiency.

For members' information each year approval to apply the agreed increases is sought in full compliance with the *Code of Practice 16/2001* for the **Governance of State Bodies on Remuneration & Superannuation** in a timely manner. Regrettably, approval for the payment of increases is subject to an unacceptable and inordinate delay. The process for both schemes require two signatures, The Minister for Environment, Climate & Communications, and the Minister for Finance.

Over recent years an additional group, New Economy and Recovery Authority (**NewERA**), has become involved, resulting in additional scrutiny and delay.

As an example, the **eircom** Board, following Board, Trustee and Actuary approval, wrote to the Ministers in early October 2022. Ministerial sign-off was received in April 2023 and pension payments were included in the pension payroll in May 2023. A total of 8 months from approval request to payment to pensioners. It is worth noting that, over the years, all increases sent for approval reach the same conclusion and are awarded.

Similar delays have been encountered at **An Post**, where agreement has been secured in January with the

assistance of the Labour Court for restoration of a two phase increase of 6% pensionable pay in addition to an agreed 2% due from the 1st January 2023. To secure payment of the three increases, **An Post** is obliged to make three separate applications. Apart from the utter frustration of pensioners, this is placing unnecessary administrative costs on the schemes.

In both examples above, there is no delay or fault attributable to either company. Neither should there be, as the increases are not funded by the companies and are paid from the scheme funds both of which are healthy because of prudent management by trustees and sacrifices of members.

NewERA's brief is to provide financial and commercial advice to Government Ministers and Departments. In circumstances where increases already comply with collective agreements (approved at the time by both Departments) have company, pension trustees and actuarial approval, there is no justifiable reason for their prolonged intervention and unnecessary delay. At best it should be an oversight procedure which would allow fast-track Ministerial approval to be put in place.

It is clear to the CWU that the approval process needs streamlining and we have written to the **ICTU General Secretary, Owen Reidy**, who supports our position, to coordinate an approach through the **ICTU** in respect of the way government deals with pension increases in the semi-state sector.

Our pensioners have given very loyal service to the company and state and they cannot understand the delay in payment of their entitlements, particularly given the current cost of living crisis.

Nonetheless the CWU welcomes the recent Ministerial approval of pension increases for **eir pensioners**. The 3% increase, effective from July 2022, along with arrears was included in the pension payroll in May.

CWU donates €50,000 to Turkey and Syrian Earthquake Relief Response



CWU donates to postal workers in UK, strike impacting Ireland

The Communications Workers Union (CWU) has donated €100,000 to its sister union, CWU UK in its dispute with Royal Mail, at which the ongoing industrial action is impacting postal operations in Ireland.



ICTU – the Future of Collective Bargaining



Owen Reidy, ICTU General Secretary, addresses Seminar

The Private Sector Committee of Congress hosted a seminar on the Future of Collective Bargaining on the 3rd April 2023 in CWU Head Office.

82 affiliate Organisers and Officials attended and participated. The meeting received a presentation on the LEEF High-Level Group report and the Adequate Minimum Wages Directive.

The purpose of the Seminar was to outline in

detail the provisions in both initiatives and to have a facilitated discussion around the needs of the trade union movement as we implement them in 2023/2024.

It was a very successful event and the content from the facilitated discussions has been fed back to Congress, to inform the next steps.

All of that work will inform and affect the landscape in which all ICTU affiliates will operate and will assist in the delivery of each Union's own strategies.



Branch Secretary Stage 1 Training

Our five-day **Branch Secretary Stage 1** course was held April 25th, 26th, 27th and on May 3rd and 4th. This year we trained twenty new Branch Secretaries, which was the largest number we have trained to date. All newly-elected Branch Secretaries attend the Stage 1 course to

prepare them for their role.

During the training we covered the duties of the Branch Secretary, negotiation skills and other modules relevant to the role. Our thanks to the group for their participation.



In attendance were:

Adetokunbo Abidoye (Portlaoise/Naas Area Managers), Elaine Cockburn (Clonmel Postal), Ken Colgan (Dublin Postal Managers), Maureen Conway (eir Managers), Sive Corrigan (eir Drogheda District), Alanna Cotter (eir Cork District), Clare Delaney (Portlaoise Postal), Dejan Grkcevic (eir Dublin No 1), Conor Keane (Limerick Postal), David Kelly (Carlow Postal), Karl Kinsella

(Cavan Postal), James Monaghan (eir Sligo District), Enda Moran (eir Galway District), Patrick Moran (eir Sligo District), Maurice Noonan (Postal Maintenance Branch), Tim Noonan (Mallow Postal), Teddy Murphy (North Kerry Postal), Neil Quinn (Longford Postal), Danny Shannon (eir Waterford District), and David Stack (eir Dublin No 1).

Mallow Postal Committee Training

We were very pleased to deliver training to the Mallow Postal Branch on May 12th & 13th. This was mostly a newly-elected Committee and we focused on Grievance and Disciplinary issues, and the effective running of a Union Branch Committee. We wish the Branch every success for the future.

In attendance were:

Andy Burke, Anthony Cronin, Linda Doyle, Finbar Corcoran, Ned Griffin, Maurice Hartnett, Shaun Lehane, Tim Noonan, Jerry O'Brien, Mikey O'Brien, Ray O'Brien, Alan O'Riordan and Kevin Ruby.



Chairperson Training



Back Row (l to r): Rosin Doughty, Gus Hayes, Gordan Ward, Shane Leahy, Michael Brannelly and Alan Walsh.

Front Row (l to r): Don White, Jack Harrington, Catherine Farrell, Dwayne Murtagh, Tadgh Murphy and Robert Kent.

This year our **Chairperson Training Course** took place between May 16th and 18th. Again, we had a very high attendance on the course. All newly-elected Chairpersons attend this course to learn about their role within their Branch Structure. We cover other relevant modules, such as grievance

and disciplinary procedures, equality at work, health and safety and many others. We also focus on practical Chairing skills and preparation for Committee meetings and AGMs. Our thanks to all who participated.

In attendance were:

Michael Brannley (Ballina Postal), Rosin Doughty (Kells Postal), Catherine Farrell (Kells Postal), Martin Flynn (Cavan Postal), Jack Harrington (eir Sligo District), Gus Hayes (Postal Maintenance Branch), Robert Kent (Naas Postal), Shane Leahy (eir Limerick District), Donna Looney (eir Cork

District), Tadgh Murphy (eir Limerick District), Dwayne Murtagh (eir Drogheda District), Daniel Naughton (eir Sligo District), Ann Walsh (Ballinasloe Postal), Gordan Ward (Mullingar Postal) and Don White (Portlaoise Postal).

CWU Branch Officer Training



In attendance were:

Padraig Heduan, Maurice Hartnett, Alan McCormack, Steven O'Connor, Andrew Keehan, Michael Dineen,
John Armstrong, Declan O'Boyle, Jackie McNamara, and Jimmy Hayes.

Treasurer's Training



In attendance were:

Darren McGann, Gerry Clerkin, Karac Kennedy, Brian Mullarkey, Gerry Feery, Michael Wall, Declan Halpenny
Ray Lynam, Alan Tyrrell and Tutors: Ellen Moore & Willie Mooney

Whistleblowing

In the past many employees may have had concerns around protected disclosures, how to raise them and what the likely impact maybe to their working lives. The Whistleblowing legislation is a significant development as it will lead to enhancements on how protected disclosures can be addressed.

In this article Bernadette Daly of CC Solicitors outlines the main provision of the legislation and its impact for both employers and employees

Ireland

The original Irish Protected Disclosures Act 2014 was enacted on 15 July 2014. The Irish Protected Disclosures (Amendment) Act 2022 ("the Act") was signed into law in July 2022 and represents a very substantial development in Irish law related to whistleblowing and imposes significant new obligations on employers.

The updated legislation includes a number of key enhancements to existing whistleblowing protections and measures, such as:

- Widening the scope of individuals who are afforded protection beyond employees to include volunteers, interns, job applicants, suppliers, shareholders and non-executive directors;
- Reversing the burden of proof. Where a worker alleges penalisation, the new legislation shifts the burden to the employer to prove that the employer's actions were based on duly justified grounds and not because the worker made a protected disclosure. Where an employer is found to have penalised a worker for having raised a protected disclosure, the Workplace Relations Commission can award compensation of up to five year's remuneration;
- Requiring that employers with between 50 and 249 employees establish internal channels and procedures for the making of protected disclosures on or before **17 December 2023**;
- Requiring that employers with 250 plus employees have established internal channels and procedures for the making of protected disclosures by **1 January 2023**;
- Interpersonal grievances: a new exclusionary provision endeavours to exclude personal grievances from the scope of the legislation being matters exclusively affecting a reporting person. However, legal advice should be sought before

making a decision as, due to the fact that there is no public interest requirement, there may be individual grievances that would not come within this exclusion (e.g., complaints about an individual worker's health and safety).

A stepped disclosure regime is envisaged which sees the first disclosure being made to one's employer. The Act provides for the establishment of the Office of the Protected Disclosures Commissioner.

The Act creates a range of criminal offences and penalties. They cover scenarios such as hindering the making of a protected disclosure or penalising a worker for making a protected disclosure. Depending on the particular offence, there are a range of heavy potential fines of anything up to €250,000. A conviction of a body corporate can even result in potential imprisonment for an offending director, manager, secretary or other officer for up to 12 months upon summary conviction or up to 2 years upon indictment.

Employers in Ireland need to ensure they have appropriate whistleblowing procedures in place. Any existing whistleblowing procedures should be reviewed against the detailed provisions of the Act particularly the timelines for response which include the requirement to acknowledge receipt of a protected disclosure within **7 days** of receipt and to appoint a designated impartial person to follow up diligently on all reports received and provide feedback to the reporting person within **3 months** of acknowledgment of receipt.

Employers with 250 employees or more, who do not have a local whistleblowing procedure in place, should take immediate steps to put one in place, and employers who have between 50-249 employees should prepare to do likewise by December 2023. While it might not be legally required, it is recommended that employers with less than 50 employees also have a local whistleblowing procedure in place in order to ensure any whistleblowing complaints are dealt with appropriately.

ROBERT TRESSEL FESTIVAL

The inaugural Robert Tressell Festival (RTF) was held in Liberty Hall on the 6th May 2023. There was a celebration of the world-famous working class novel (The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists) of the Dublin born author.

CWU supported the event, including making a financial contribution.

Born Robert Noonan in Dublin in 1870, Tressell's own life connects the story of the workers' movement from Ireland to Britain and internationally. However, in the city of his birth, his legacy and the important role his book has played in modern trade unionist and socialist culture had been largely overlooked.

The book would become a seminal text on the exploitative nature of capitalist society for generations of trade unionists.

The event in Liberty Hall was a day of politics, music and culture. The discussions covered topics such as organising, diversity and economics, culminating in an

Fionnuala
Ní Bhrógáin



evening celebration featuring keynote speakers Phil Ní Sheaghda (INMO) and Mick Lynch of the RMT.

Speaking on a panel entitled "*The Great Money Trick*", a crucial chapter of the book, CWU Head of Organising, Fionnuala Ní Bhrógáin, outlined the parallels between the world Tressell created and our own workplaces of today. Recognising both the challenges and the opportunities facing the trade union movement in Ireland, Fionnuala underlined the need for workers in non-union companies to come together to Organise in order to better understand the system in which they work so that they can build power in their own lives.



Mick Lynch (General Secretary of the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers in the UK) with Diarmuid O'Connell (Industrial Organiser CWU).

UPS Update

In January, UPS announced that there were to be a number of redundancies across the operation. Following that announcement, the CWU sought a comprehensive business update from the company to outline the rationale for its decision. As part of that process, the company cited falling parcel volumes, Brexit, the war in Ukraine and the energy crisis as the key factors that were driving the decision. The CWU has ensured that all redundancies would be voluntary, and the selection criteria would be based on seniority. Additionally, the Company gave assurances to the Union that it would honour the terms of six weeks per year of service for those who were in scope.

The process has now been completed in Shannon and Dublin. In Cork, the timeline was initially projected for July due to the amalgamation of the two Cork buildings. However, that date has been put back to quarter three due to delays related to the building. The Union has outlined to the company that there are concerns from members in Cork relating to the facilities that will be provided in the new unit. The Company has agreed to meet with local Representatives in advance of the move to address any such concerns. Members will be kept up to date on developments.

We want to acknowledge the role of the local Representatives in representing and guiding their members through an extremely difficult process and stressful time.

Pay Agreement 2023 – UPS

UPS workers have overwhelmingly accepted the terms of a new pay proposal for 2023. The new agreement provides for a pay increase of 5% effective from 1st April. As part of the agreement, sick pay for incidental absences will be limited to ten days per calendar year, while the long-term sick pay (i.e. over two weeks) will remain at up to twenty weeks' sick pay. The agreement comes on the back of a 5.5% increase for last year and has resulted in pay increasing by 10.5% over the past twelve months for Drivers, Helpers and Pre-loaders in UPS.

The pay deal was achieved in the extremely challenging context of the Company's announcement in January 2023, reported above, that there were to be a number of redundancies across the UPS operation. Again, local Representatives played a pivotal role in the negotiations.

KN Activists' Organising Training

In March, two groups of KN activists attended Union head office for Organising training with a view to strengthening the structures of the KN Branch. The activists were identified at induction by CWU Organisers and the training was tailored toward establishing a more effective geographical representation for CWU members in KN. Following the training, a number of those activists put themselves forward for election at the KN AGM and are now committee members.

Kn Circet

At the recent AGM, in early May, a new KN Branch Committee was elected. The intention is to have a follow up first committee meeting in early June to commence a process of engagement with our members to capture agenda items for discussion and agreement with management.

On the network side we recently agreed changes to the annual leave process.

On going to press we are engaged with senior management on a pay increase for 2023 and we will update our members when discussions conclude.



**WEAR YOUR
UNION BADGE**

CHANGES IN PENSION ENTITLEMENTS



Social welfare weekly payments

The maximum rate of all weekly social welfare payments will increase by €12 with proportional increases for qualified adults and people on reduced rates of payment (January 2023).

People aged 25 and under who are getting a reduced rate of Jobseeker's Allowance will get the full €12 increase (January 2023).

Fuel Allowance

People getting Fuel Allowance will get a once-off payment of €400 (November 2022).

The Fuel Allowance income threshold will increase from €120 to €200 above the applicable State Pension (Contributory) rate for people aged under 70 (January 2023).

People aged 70 and over can qualify for Fuel Allowance as long as their weekly means (which includes their State Pension) is not above €500 per week for a single person and €1,000 per week for a couple (January 2023).

Living Alone Increase

People getting Living Alone Increase will get a once-off payment of €200 (November 2022).

If you get Fuel Allowance and Living Alone Increase, you will get both once-off payments.

Medical Cards

What health services are normally covered?

If you have a medical card, you are entitled to:

- Free GP (family doctor) services, including out-of-hours services

- Prescribed drugs and medicines — some prescription charges apply
- In-patient public hospital services, out-patient services and medical appliances
- Dental, optical and aural services
- Maternity and infant care services
- Some personal and social care services, for example, public health nursing, social work services and other community care services
- Short-term counselling for mild to moderate psychological difficulties, using the Counselling in Primary Care Service

Where to apply for a Medical Card

Client Registration Unit

4th Floor
HSE PCRS
Finglas
Dublin 11
Tel: (051) 595 129
Locall: 0818 22 44 78
Fax: (01) 834 3589

Homepage: <http://www.medicalcard.ie>

Contact Form: <https://www2.hse.ie/services/medical-cards/contact-medical-cards-service.html>

Email: clientregistration@hse.ie

Client Registration Unit (Postal applications)

P.O Box 11745
Finglas
Dublin 11
D11 XKF3

For more information please go to
www.citizensinformation.ie

Be SunSmart



Slip on clothing that covers your skin, long sleeves, collared t-shirts



Slop on sunscreen on exposed areas using factor 50+ for children



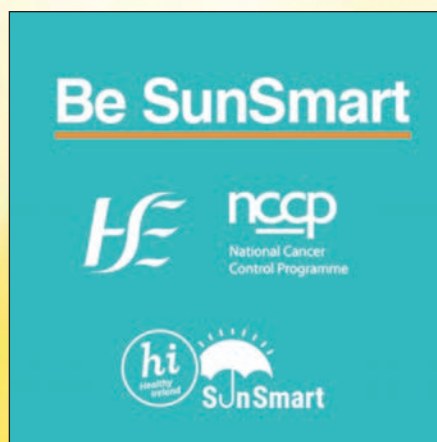
Slap on a wide-brimmed hat



Seek shade - especially if outdoors between 11 am and 3 pm



Slide on sunglasses to protect your eyes



1 in 4 skin cancer deaths in Ireland are in the construction, outdoor and farming industries

eir says complaints have 'decreased significantly' following ComReg fine

It said it is now resolving customer complaints almost 17% faster than the industry average for fixed-line issues

by TechCentral.ie – 19 May 2023



eir said complaints to Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) have “*decreased significantly in the last 24 months*”. In its latest quarterly results report, it said it is now resolving customer complaints almost 17% faster than the industry average for fixed-line issues and almost 30% faster for mobile issues.

Earlier this week, eir’s parent company was fined €2.45 million for overcharging customers across six years. ComReg issued the fine to eircom Ltd, ordering the firm to refund over €6.5 million to an estimated 76,000 customers who had been overcharged.

eir said it will implement a series of “*backward-looking measures*” to identify customers who have been overcharged historically and have not been refunded for the overcharge and will refund these customers appropriately.

Results

Meanwhile, the telco said its revenue increased by 2% to €304 million in the quarter, while EBITDA decreased 9% to €128 million year-on-year due to increased sales and marketing and mobile network costs which will support an acceleration in commercial momentum throughout the year.

Customers using fibre broadband services totalled 845,000 at quarter end, representing an increase of 2% or 14,000 customers year on year. Of the group’s broadband base, 89% is now connected to eir’s fibre network, which represents a 42% penetration of total premises passed with eir fibre broadband.

Its mobile base stood at 1.3 million customers at quarter end, an increase of 9% or 105,000 year on year.

While its postpay base increased by 11% or 102,000 subscribers. Postpay subscribers now represent 75% of the total mobile base.

Solid start

Oliver Loomes, eir CEO, said the first quarter of 2023 proved a “solid start to the year, and we remain on course to add another 250,000 homes and businesses to our fibre-to-the-home broadband network, already available to more than one million premises.

“*When combined with eir’s existing fibre-to-the-cabinet network, more than 2 million premises now have access to fibre broadband. eir is investing €250 million annually in new technologies and networks which is truly transforming Ireland, allowing individuals and businesses to access new services or markets at speeds and capacity unimaginable before now.*

“*We are also becoming increasingly reliant on mobile data to live and work. In Q1 this year eir recorded a 41% increase in the use of mobile data over the first quarter of 2022. eir has responded to this growing demand for data by, not only enabling incredible 5G speeds on all of its mobile plans, but by significantly expanding its 5G mobile network, which now offers ultrafast data access to customers across 547 towns and cities in Ireland.*

“*The market has responded to this investment, with this quarter demonstrating yet another significant jump in eir mobile customers, up 9%, or 105,000, on the equivalent period last year. eir TV has also grown by a similar proportion, showing that a growing number of customers are availing of product bundling to generate extraordinary value for their households and families.”*

Pay Agreement Secured in PhoneWatch

In late 2022, CWU Officials and the PhoneWatch Branch entered into negotiations on a new pay agreement for our members in PhoneWatch.

On conclusion of these negotiations, the following proposals were put to a ballot.

- A pay agreement for 12 months – 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023
- An overall pay increase of 4.5 % for all graded staff in PhoneWatch
- €500 once-off gift card payable in December 2023 for all staff
- €2 increase in daily subsistence rate for field staff backdated to January 2023 (also applies to overtime rate)

- KPI alignment to % base salary increase for all field staff

The 4.5% pay increase (based on January 2023 salary) will apply as follows:

- A 3.5% increase, to be applied from January 1st, 2023
- A further 1% increase from July 1st, 2023

The above increases are in line with those negotiated in other industries and in accordance with the guidelines of pay claims recommended by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. Our members in PhoneWatch voted in favour of the pay proposals. This is a very strong outcome and was only made possible by the commitment and hard work of our members and their representatives in PhoneWatch.



NRT Payment, Deployment and Drop Points

The following was agreed at our April National Executive meeting.

NRT Payment

- Ex apprentices currently in receipt of the €2000 NRT payment will receive a **25% increase to €2500**.

The effective date is 01 July 2023.

Deployment

- NRT technicians will be **eligible to choose vouched expenses** when they are deployed for 1 week or greater once pre-approved by their FLM.

The process and payment of these vouched expenses is as per existing company policy through ODOO.

Drop Points

- The main Drop Point function in Galway will be closed in May following retirement of the Drop Point Manager. Galway will then be served from the adjacent DPs of Limerick Sligo and Dublin.

A delivery location will be retained at Galway to carry out onward deliveries. Lids and Boxes and developer duct will be retained in Galway for issue.

- Over the coming year the Limerick Drop Point will reduce from 2 Drop Point staff to 1.

The 25% increase and the choice of payment towards deployment expense demonstrates achievements clear progress on behalf of our NRT members and goes some way to dealing with concerns raised at our recent AGMs. The Drop Point changes are reflective of the decreased activity in the stores area in the last 18 months.

16% Pay Increase Secured for Vodafone Retail

The CWU Vodafone Branch engaged with the company on pay at the end of 2022 in order to address the cost-of-living crisis and the company accepted the need to review rates of pay for retail staff. As a result of this engagement, the company has reviewed salaries and as a result will be

increasing all current Retail salaries by 16% with effect from January 1st 2023.

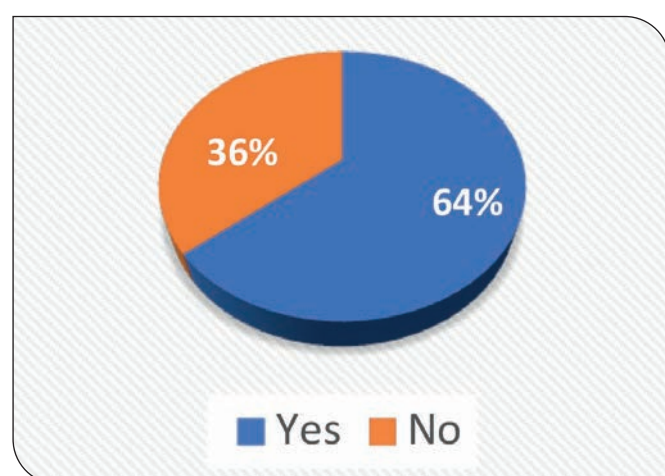
In conjunction with this the company has awarded staff a tax-free voucher, €500 for full-time staff and €250 for part-time staff, in recognition of the cost-of-living crisis.

eir Retail Survey

In March 2023, the CWU conducted an online survey of our members in Retail.

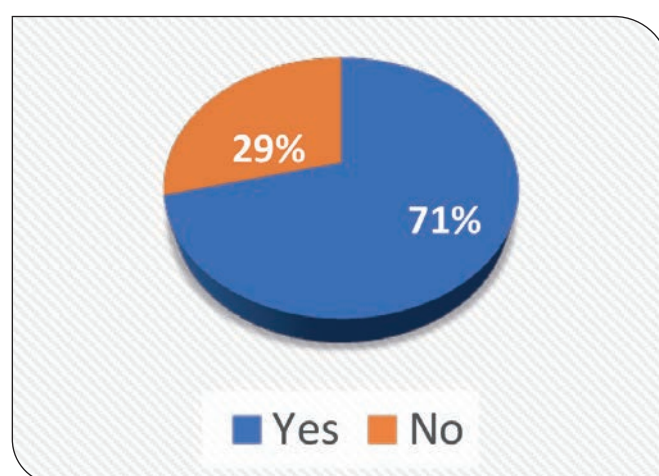
The purpose of the survey was to engage with our members in Retail stores across the country and gain an understanding of issues that impact them.

Q1. Do you have an issue with stocking levels in your store?



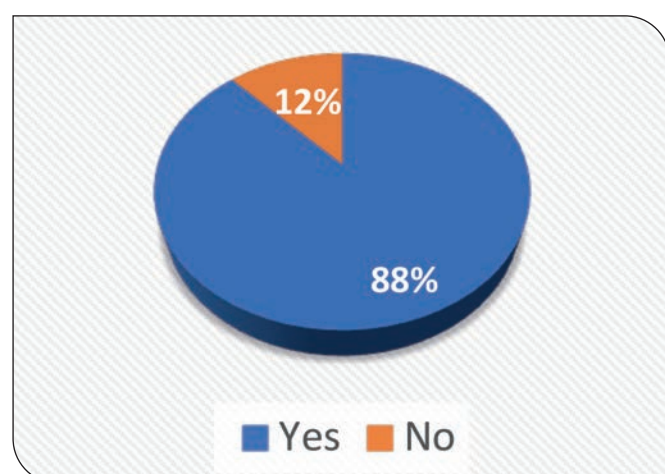
64% of respondents indicated that they have had stocking issues in their store.

Q2. Do these issues impact on your ability to make sales?



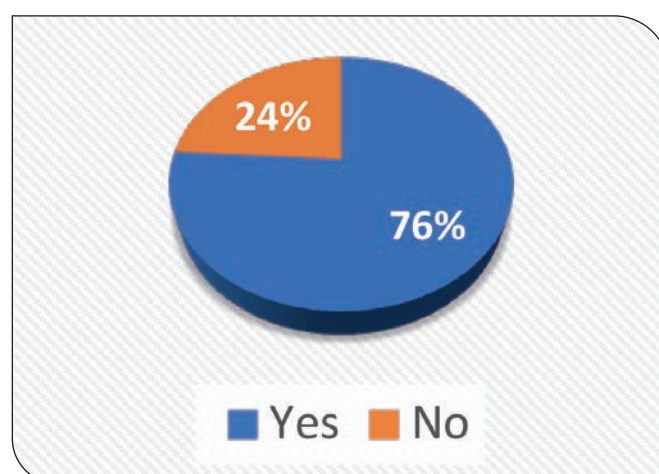
71% of those surveyed responded that stocking level issues impacted on their ability to sell.

Q3. Is your store fully staffed?



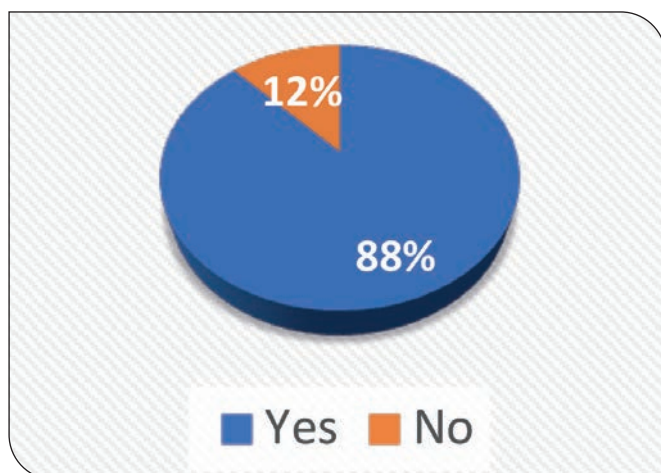
12% of respondents indicated that their store was not fully staffed.

Q4. Is verbal abuse from your customers an issue for you?



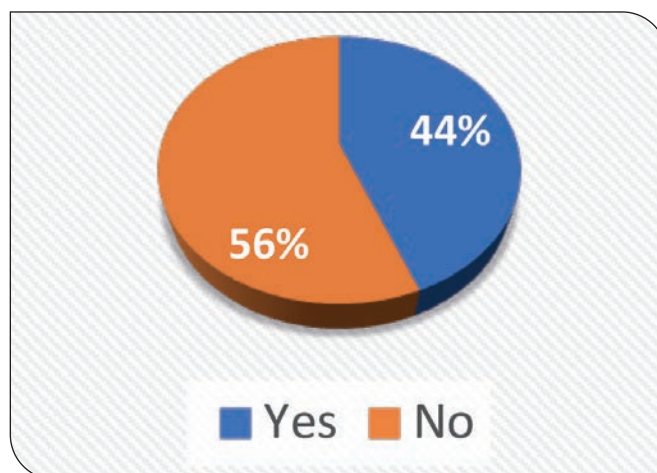
76% of those surveyed said that they had experienced verbal abuse from customers.

Q5. Is physical abuse from customers an issue for you?



12% of respondents noted that they had an issue with physical abuse from customers.

Q6. Have you ever been on shift during a store robbery?



44% of those who participated in the survey experienced a robbery while on shift in their store.

Q7. Are there any additional measures that you would like to see implemented in your store or that could be introduced by eir management?

Answers included:

- Training
- The removal of high-end phones from front of shop
- Security
- Signs from management stating that customer abuse will not be tolerated
- Risk assessments

eir Retail Survey Outcome

The survey reveals that there are a number of issues impacting our members in eir retail including stock levels, verbal abuse and store robberies. The findings of the Survey inform the basis of our discussions with eir management with a view to addressing the issues that have been identified. The feedback from Members is appreciated.



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Reducing Costs for CWU Members

FM Downes are privileged to have a long history providing valuable advice to CWU members while ensuring you are not paying a euro more than you need to for your insurance products. With the latter being so important in the present economic climate we would like to offer you a **FREE** review which will hopefully result in significant savings while retaining a high level of cover.

Save on your Health & Travel Insurance



Kate Ruane QFA CIP
Insurance Specialist
kate@fmdownes.com

If you are currently paying into private health insurance with Laya, VHI or Irish Life Health outside of the CWU group scheme, it is highly recommended that you contact us for a review:

- ✓ Price reductions on corporate plans
- ✓ Free Travel Insurance on selected plans
- ✓ Handy payment through payroll deduction

Save on your Mortgage & Mortgage Protection



Sean Monks QFA LIB
Financial Advisor
sean@fmdownes.com

If you pay mortgage protection to the bank, contact us for a review to see how much you could save. We can also carry out a free mortgage review to see if you can avail of a better rate:

- ✓ Max Discounts on Mortgage Protection
- ✓ Review of current mortgage rate
- ✓ Special First Time Buyer No Fee Package

See how much you could reduce your costs by...

- 📞 Call **01 8556666**
- 💬 Text **'Review'** to **51444** to receive a call
- 🌐 Visit **www.fmdownes.com** to schedule a call
- ✉ Email **info@fmdownes.com** subject line "CWU Review"





Workers' Memorial Day Ireland



CWU members observe a minute's silence in memory of those who died at work.

Workers' Memorial Day takes place every year on 28th April. It is an International Day of Remembrance for those who have been killed or seriously injured in work-related incidents. In Ireland, 461 people were killed in work-related incidents over a 10 year period, from 2013 to 2022. In the first quarter of 2023, five people were killed in work-related incidents.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions has taken the lead for many years in marking International Workers' Memorial Day (IWMD). The CWU has always fully supported this International Day of Remembrance and we have placed a plaque in our Head Office garden dedicated to the memory of those killed, injured or made ill as a result of their work, which was unveiled on Workers' Memorial Day 2014. This is an important day for trade unions as it allows us an opportunity to advocate for safer workplaces and raise health and safety issues of concern to workers.

This year the annual ceremony to remember workers who went to work and tragically never returned home or suffered life-changing injuries in the workplace was held in the Garden of Remembrance on 28th April. The remembrance ceremony was led by ICTU, the Health and Safety Authority, and the government, and was supported by IBEC, the Construction Industry Federation, and the National Irish Safety Organisation. Speakers at the event included Owen Reidy, General Secretary of ICTU, Mark Cullen, Interim Chief Executive of HAS, Karen McGowan of the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation, and Minister Neal Richmond TD.

The event included a wreath-laying ceremony and a minute's silence was observed. Music was performed by the CWU Band. The Minister, in his contribution, welcomed the reduction in work-related deaths but stated that even one death in the workplace is one too many. He stated that: *"It is incumbent on all employers*

and employees to make health and safety a top priority in their organisation. There can be no complacency when it comes to preventing work-related deaths, injuries, or illnesses."

Owen Reidy, General Secretary of ICTU, said: *"Part of the tragedy of these losses is that we actually know how to stop workplace fatalities and injuries. The evidence is there. It involves workers and managers cooperating to create safe systems of work, to assess hazards and to reduce risks. It involves education and training for workers and management and support for the role of safety representatives in our workplaces. It requires monitoring, prevention, protection, and reporting. And it also requires compliance measures including inspections, and penalties for those who do not take their legal and moral responsibilities seriously."*

Seán McDonagh, General Secretary of the CWU, spoke following the National Commemorative event in the Garden of Remembrance:

"On this day we remember workers killed or injured at work and those who suffer ill-health because of work. According to the International Labour Organisation, every year 2.78 million work-related deaths are recorded worldwide. In addition to causing suffering and heartache for the families, work colleagues and friends, the economic cost for enterprises is colossal. Employers, workers and trade unions working together can reduce fatalities, accident and incidents at work. Trade unions will continue to fight risks at work, such as workplace stress, violence and harassment. Organised workplaces are safer workplaces."

There was a large attendance of CWU representatives at the event and the CWU took the opportunity to highlight health and safety concerns through our social media platforms.



An Post Pension

All you need to know about the An Post Superannuation Schemes

The Schemes

The An Post Superannuation Schemes derived from the Postal and Telecommunications Act 1983 and were approved by the Minister following the establishment of An Post. The scheme is managed by Trustees and administered by the Pensions Section in the GPO who calculate and pay members' benefits. The assets from the funds are separate from the Company's own funds.

On the 31st of December 2021 the schemes had the following membership:

- Active Members – 8,964
- Deferred Members – 2,510
- Pensioners – 5,606
- Spouses and children – 1,379

The pension scheme provides a pension for life in addition to a once off lump sum when you retire. The amount you receive depends on your pensionable earnings when you retire and the amount of service you have at that stage.

PRSI Rates

Employees in An Post generally fall into two categories of PRSI. Employees in full-time positions prior to the 5th of April 1995 pay a lower or modified rate of PRSI, which is Class D. Those recruited after that day pay the full rate of PRSI, called Class A. A small number of temporary/part-time staff recruited prior to the 5th April 1995, also pay the Class A rate.

Only employees who pay the Class A rate of PRSI are entitled to the State Pension (Contributory) once they reach the relevant age. The retirement age in An Post is dependent on when you commenced and the rate of PRSI you pay.

For those employees who were employed pre the establishment of An Post, 1st January 1984, their Normal Retirement Age (NRA) is date on which they reach the age of 60.

For those paying Class D rate of PRSI (lower rate) and who joined after 1st January 1984, their NRA is when they have completed 40 years' pensionable employment provided that at such time their age is not less than 60 years, or the date on which they attain the age at which the State Pension (Contributory) is payable.

For those paying the Class A rate of PRSI the Normal Retirement Age is the date on which they become eligible for the State Pension (Contributory) which is currently age 66.

In all cases the Maximum Retirement Age (MRA) is

the date on which an employee becomes eligible for the State Pension (Contributory) Pension i.e., 66.

Pensionable remuneration is calculated based on whether you pay the higher or lower rate of PRSI. If you pay the reduced rate, then pensionable pay is made up of your pensionable pay at the time you retire plus any pensionable allowances. If you pay the full rate, then pensionable pay is reduced to allow for the fact that you will be getting a Social Welfare contributory pension. Your pensionable pay plus any pensionable allowances is reduced by twice the rate of the Social Welfare Pension which will give you your net pensionable remuneration. **Pensionable allowances** are calculated based on the average of your pensionable allowances paid over the last three years you work prior to retirement. Pensionable allowances include NDA, Shift Allowance, Driving Allowances, Saturday Allowances etc..

Reckonable service is any service in the Company between the age of 16 and the maximum retirement age, provided the appropriate pension contributions are made. All special leave or sick leave which is paid at either full or half pay is reckonable. Unpaid special leave or sick leave at TRR (previously pension rate) is not reckonable.

Work sharing or part time service is reckoned as a proportion of full time working. Examples below.

Example A

John has 40 years' service completed with the Company. He worked full time for 34 years and worked week on week off for 6 years. His service at retirement would be 37 years.

Example B

Mary has 40 years' service completed with the Company working 21 hours per week. This is the equivalent of 0.56 full time service per week i.e., $37.5 / 21 = 0.56$. Each year she would work the equivalent of 29.12 weeks i.e., $0.56 * 52$. Therefore after 40 years she would have 31.06 years' service at retirement i.e., $(40 * 29.12) / 37.5$.

Pension Lump Sum

The lump sum which you receive when you reach your maximum retirement age is calculated as $3/80$ of your pensionable remuneration multiplied by your reckonable service at the time of retirement.

Example

Ann has 36 years' service when she retires. Her pensionable remuneration is €40,000. Her lump sum

would be calculated as follows:

$$40,000 * 36 * 3/80 = €54,000$$

The calculation for the lump is the same regardless of which rate of PRSI you pay.

Your lump sum is not subject to income tax, or the universal social charge unless it exceeds €200,000.

Pension

Your pension is calculated based on:

- Your reckonable service when you retire.
- Your full-time pensionable remuneration
- Whether you pay Class A or Class D PRSI

Your pension is calculated as 1/80 of your pensionable remuneration if you pay Class D and 1/80 of your net pensionable remuneration if you pay Class A. Two examples are set out below explaining the above.

Example A

Mary retires from An Post at 66 years of age with 40 years' service. At the time she retired her pensionable remuneration was €40,000 and she paid PRSI at Class D rate. Her pension would be calculated as follows:

$$40 \text{ years} \times 40,000 \times 1/80 = €20,000$$

Mary would receive €20,000 per annum as a pension from the An Post Superannuation Scheme.

Example B

Tony retires from An Post at 66 years of age with 40 years' service. At the time he retired his pensionable remuneration was €40,000 and he paid PRSI at Class A rate. The State Pension (Contributory) is currently €13,795.60 so Tony's pensionable remuneration is deducted by twice the State Pension (Contributory) €27,592 providing net pensionable remuneration of €12,408. His pension is then calculated as follows:

$$40 \text{ years} \times 12,408 \times 1/80 = €6,204$$

Tony would receive €6,204 per annum as a pension from the An Post Superannuation Scheme and in addition he would receive €13,796 from the state.

Superannuation on Health Grounds

If you must retire early due to ill health and you have more than 5 years' reckonable service extra years may be added to your reckonable service. This is subject to a maximum of 6 years and 243 days. Added years may be added on the following basis:

- If the member has between 5 years and 10 years' service they may be allowed an equivalent amount of ill health notional service
- If the member has between 10 and 20 years' service they may be allowed the more favourable of:

- An amount of ill health notional service to the period by which 20 years exceeds the said full time equivalent service or
- 6 years and 243 days
- If the member has more than 20 years' service they will be allowed the lesser of:
 - 6 years and 243 days or
 - The amount by which the full time equivalent service he/she would have served to age 60 or (age 65 in the case of a fully state insured pre 6 April 1995 member)

While the exact number of added years allowable will vary from one case to another, the overall notional service allowable cannot exceed the full time equivalent service that the employee would have if he/she had served to their Minimum Retirement Age or in the case of a fully state insured pre – 6 April 1995 member the minimum age at which the State Pension(Contributory) is payable.

Purchase of Service

Notional service may be purchased by a lump sum payment or by deductions from wages. Any payments made would be free of income tax. The details of this are being worked on with the Company.

Death in Service

If you die in service death benefit is payable to your legal representative as follows:

- The full time equivalent of one year's pensionable remuneration

Or if it is greater,

- The amount of the lump sum that would have been payable had you retired on ill health grounds on the date of death.

Resignation from the Company before Normal Retirement Age

If you resign before your NRA, then your benefits are put on hold until you reach your NRA. These preserved benefits will be uprated to take account of increases in pensionable pay from the date of your resignation until your NRA.

Retirement after 60 if my NRA is after 60

You can retire at any time after age 60. However, your pension and lump sum will be actuarially reduced if your NRA is after age 60.



Spouses and Children's Scheme

The S&CS provides benefits to a member's spouse or civil partner and children after the members death. This is regardless of whether the member dies in service or in retirement. You must be a member of the scheme to qualify for the following benefits.

For one month after the members death a payment of 1/12 of the deceased pensionable remuneration or net pensionable remuneration (PRSI Class A) will be made. After that, a pension for life will be paid to the spouse or civil partner, and until the age of 16 for the children. This can be extended to age 21 if they are in full time education. If a child is incapacitated, then this can be continued indefinitely at the discretion of the trustees.

When calculating how much the pension will be you need to firstly calculate the pension that would have been paid to the member. The surviving spouse or civil partner will receive half of this and a further one sixth of the pension will be paid if there is one child, 1/3 if 2 children and half the potential pension if there are three children or more.

If the member dies in retirement, then the member's full pension is paid to the surviving spouse or civil partner, for one month. After that the surviving spouse or civil partner will receive half of the members pension and a further one sixth of the pension will be paid if there is one child, 1/3 if there are 2 children and half the potential pension if there are three children or more.

All members of the Scheme contribute 1.5% of basic pensionable pay for those paying Class D PRSI rate and 1.5% of net pensionable pay for those paying Class A PRSI.

If you have pensionable allowances on top of your basic pensionable pay, then there is a further once off deduction made from your lump sum when you retire or if you die in service. This is 1% of your annual average pensionable allowance paid in your last three years of service multiplied by your full-time equivalent service.

Pension Scheme Actuary

Pension Scheme Actuaries assess the financial consequences of risks to a pension scheme and determine the financial impact of uncertain future events. They are primarily concerned with the payment of benefits, including death benefits, from a pension plan. Pension actuaries also calculate the required amount of an employer's annual contribution to a defined benefit plan to ensure that current and future benefits are available to the members. The An Post Pension Scheme Actuaries are Mercer's.

Actuarial Assumptions

When putting a present value on all the future benefits payable from a defined benefit scheme, the scheme actuary will make assumptions about things like future

inflation, salary increases, member mortality and the rate of investment return on the scheme's assets. These assumptions form the basis of an actuarial valuation or other actuarial calculation. Actuarial assumptions are also used when projecting the value of a defined contribution pension fund at retirement, and the amount of pension that an individual might purchase with their pension fund.

Triennial Valuation

At least every three years, the scheme's actuary (Mercer) values the liabilities of the scheme, compares this to the value of the scheme's assets and calculates the amount of money that must be contributed into the scheme in future years to meet the benefits that are payable. The latest triennial valuation was completed in September 2022 and covered the period from 1st January 2019 to 31st December 2021. One of the purposes of the valuation is to set out the Scheme's ongoing funding level. It does this by comparing the value of the Scheme's accumulated assets with the value of its accrued liability.

Pensionable Allowances

As part of the recent pension agreement pensionable allowances will be restored to 100% and will not be subject to the cap going forward. The only exception to this is the Change Allowance which remains at 83.67%. These changes apply from 1st January 2022 which means that for anyone who retired since then and was in receipt of pensionable allowances, will require their pension and lump sum to be recalculated. Pensionable allowances include allowances such as NDA, Shift Allowance, Driving Allowances, Saturday Allowances etc.

When you retire your allowances are based on the average of your last three years allowances. Anyone retiring in the next year and a half will have their pension calculated as follows:

2021 – Allowances 90.75%
2022 – Allowances 100%
2023 Allowances 100%

Actuarial Reductions

Actuarial reductions are applied when individuals seek to retire before their Normal Retirement Age (NRA). As a result, both their pension and their lump sum may be reduced. This could equate to as much as 25% depending on when you want to go and what your normal retirement age is. We have agreed that members that wish to retire before their NRA will have a lower actuarial reduction applied to their lump sum and pension. Based on the other changes agreed the actuary is currently working on these and will present them to the Trustees once completed.



State Pension Offset

The An Post Superannuation Scheme is a modified version of the public sector model set up under trust and funded by contributions from An Post and its members. In line with all public sector DB schemes, the value of the benefits being accrued, and the level of employee contributions varies considerably across different cohorts of members, especially across date of joining and PRSI class.

All staff recruited prior to 6th April 1995 pay the reduced rate of PRSI (Class D) and receive their full pension from the scheme. Those recruited after 6th April 1995 pay the Class A rate of PRSI and have their An Post pension reduced by twice the value of the State Contributory pension. This is known as the State Pension Offset.

We sought that the state pension offset should be frozen for the three years of the actuarial review. The company opposed this as they contended that it would fundamentally change the structure of the scheme and that any change would be unsustainable. The Labour Court did not recommend concession of our claim but did recommend that a further examination of the matter should take place so that all parties can explore the feasibility of change in the context of their joint commitment to the sustainability of the Scheme overall.

An Post Accord Background

The Union is regularly asked why the pension accord finalised in 2013 was agreed and what other options were available to the Union at the time. Following the financial crash in 2008 almost every defined benefit pension scheme in the western world suffered from severe deficits in their funding positions. The An Post Superannuation Schemes were not immune to the crash in the equity markets which formed a substantial part of the investments of most defined pension funds.

At the end of the 2008 the value of the An Post Schemes fell by 31% which was a drop of €651m. Each defined benefit scheme is expected to meet the minimum funding standard which means that pension funds must have sufficient reserves to cover all of its liabilities in the event the scheme was wound up.

The Pension Authority regulates occupational pension schemes and any pension scheme with a deficit had to advise them of the deficit. Once that happened the Pension Authority gave pension funds a period of time in which to address the deficit by requiring them to submit funding proposals and in the case of the An Post Schemes this was to be submitted by 30th June 2013.

Any plan was required to outline precisely how the deficit in the fund would be addressed, and the minimum funding standard maintained thereafter. The plan must ensure that the Scheme is fully funded by the end of

December 2023. In addition to meeting the minimum funding standard, from January 2016 onwards schemes would be obliged to maintain a risk reserve. The risk reserve is 15% of the fund's liabilities less the amount of the fund held in EU Government Bonds or cash.

Trustees of defined benefit schemes in deficit must prepare recovery plans and submit them to the Pensions Authority for approval. These plans must have two objectives – to eliminate the scheme deficits and to place the scheme on a stable footing so that members and their dependents can be reasonably confident that the benefits promised will be paid. If no funding proposal was forwarded, then under pension law the Pension Authority would impose a funding proposal on the scheme which the scheme Trustees would be bound by.

The Group of Union's entered discussions with the Company in 2010 in an attempt to negotiate a package that would be acceptable to the members of the four Union's in An Post. However, discussions proved to be difficult primarily because of delays in introducing changes to the Pensions Act. In addition, in 2011 the Government introduced a Pension levy of 0.6% for a four-year period from 2011 to 2014 which took much needed funds out of an already stretched fund.

The Group of Unions was aware that unless we addressed the deficit and made significant changes to the pension fund it would eventually run out of money. We needed to act to ensure that pension benefits earned by members were safeguarded and that the Scheme remained financially viable and secure into the future.

Pension law dictated that should An Post and the Pension Fund Trustees fail to present an agreed plan to the Pensions Board for approval, the Pensions Board had the powers to impose a solution on the Pension fund, which would be limited to the available financial assets in the fund – a decision in which the Scheme's members, the Company, the Group of Unions, or the Trustees would have no say whatsoever. This solution would have meant that the Pension Authority would have either reduced the past service benefits for active and deferred members or else ordered that the Pension Schemes be wound up.

If the schemes were wound up then the assets of the scheme would be used to secure pension in payments to the existing pensioners at the time by the buying of annuities. This would not provide for any pension increases for them. The remaining assets of the scheme would then be used to pay pension benefits to active and deferred members. This would have meant that only 68% of member benefits would be secured.

A plan was eventually agreed which was put to the members of the four Unions in a ballot with 90% voting in favour of the plan.

Additional Voluntary Contributions

Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs) are extra contributions you can make in addition to your existing company pension to enhance your retirement benefits. They are a tax efficient way to improve your lifestyle and the financial security you enjoy in retirement.

In 2002, An Post and the An Post Trade Union Group launched an AVC Scheme for employees that are members of the main An Post Superannuation Scheme. The An Post AVC Scheme runs alongside the main company pension scheme. The contributions are deducted from salary, like regular pension payments, and qualify for tax relief.

The main pension scheme provides for a pension based on your pensionable basic pay plus any pensionable allowances (pensionable remuneration). Revenue calculates final remuneration as all pay at the time of retirement which would include bonuses, non-pensionable allowances and overtime.

The An Post AVC Scheme allows you to increase your retirement benefits in a tax efficient manner by addressing the gap between your total pay and the benefits from the main scheme particularly given the following:

- Pensionable pay is currently lower than actual pay. This will change periodically.
- The difference between your pensionable remuneration and final remuneration can be filled by an AVC.
- Revenue will let allowances be assessed based on your best three consecutive years in the final 10 years of reckonable service.

- The maximum pensionable service is 40 years. Employees can have less than full time service for a variety of reasons such as career breaks, working part time.

If your actual earnings are €50,000 but earnings for An Post Pension Scheme are €40,000 you could earn a further €15,000 as an AVC. In addition, you could invest the rest in an Approved Retirement Fund which can be drawn down during retirement.

The AVC Scheme is completely voluntary for those who wish to contribute. Zurich Life provides a wide range of investment options for members of the scheme. Halligan Insurance are the main member contact/advisor for the AVC Scheme. Both Halligan Insurance and Zurich Life are dedicated to providing members with a first-class service. Benefit statements are sent to members annually.

To promote the AVC Schemes the Trustees have organised specific communications with members to raise awareness of the value of the scheme. The first of these sessions took place in the GPO followed by an on-line session on the 9th February. All of these information sessions were well received, and it is intended to roll them out further in the second half of the year.

Members with queries or if you require information regarding your entitlements should contact

- Halligan Insurances at (01) 7992987 or email pensions@halligans.ie
- Email the Administrators at ZCP2@zurich.com

Members of the AVC are advised to review their AVC Scheme periodically with Halligan's to ensure that the benefits remain appropriate, given any changes in your personal circumstances.

Administered by

Halligan
INSURANCES



**AVCs
Now
is the
time**

New & Improved Cover For CWU Members

CWU FamilyCare

CWU

Life and Specified
Illness cover for the
whole family* at
a discounted rate



CWU FamilyCare provides peace of mind for you and your family should the worst occur.

- Up to €100,000 Life Cover per member and spouse/partner
- Up to €60,000 Specified Illness Cover per member and spouse/partner
- €10,000 Life Cover per child from birth up to age 25 - automatically included
- €20,000 Illness Cover per child from birth up to age 25 - automatically included

For more information, please contact our Life & Specified Illness Department:
Halligan Insurances - 01-8797100 or visit - www.halligan.ie

9 Months FreeCover

Offer available to eligible CWU Members under age 40 joining the plans for the first time between 29/05/2023 - 10/07/2023.



Plus - Every new CWU Life or Illness Plan entrant will be in with a chance to win a **FitBit Sense 2 or Apple Watch SE**



or



Arranged by:

Halligan
INSURANCES



One prize only of smartwatch of choice as shown. No cash alternative. Draw takes place 11th July 2023 and is open to new entrants only.

Warning: The current premium may increase after the next review of the scheme at 01/06/2025

*Whole family refers to member and spouse/civil partner and all dependant children up to age 25. Full applicable premiums for your level of cover will automatically commence after the 9 months free period. This offer is not available to existing members of the CWU Life and Specified Illness Plans. Full details are available on www.halligan.ie. T&C's apply. Halligan Life & Pensions Ltd t/a Halligan Insurances is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland.

An Post Transformation 2023 –2026 Agreement



General Secretary, Seán, explains deal to Members online and in the hall.

In February 2022, An Post members accepted a two-year pay agreement, encompassing two-phase pay increases totalling 5% which have been paid by An Post. Further agreement on improvements to Pension have also been achieved. Following direct discussions with An Post Senior Management, a comprehensive agreement has been concluded in respect of the company Transformation Programme, Sharing of Savings and to address the staff impact issues associated with implementation of agreed changes.

This enabling agreement provides certainty for members in respect of enhanced pay increases and undertakings to address the staff impact, as the agreed changes are implemented. The agreement also provides certainty for the company to progress implementation in a timely manner of its required changes to ensure the sustainability of the business.

Pay Financials - Summary

Cost of Living/Transformation

All members will receive a tax-free €750 voucher, pro rata for part time staff, which we expect will be issued in November 2023. We have secured this for **all** of the 9,000 (8,500 CWU) employees in An Post, in recognition of the continuing cost of living crisis and ongoing co-operation and support for the company transformation.

Universal Clerk

Revised Universal Clerk pay scale with a 2% increase in pay on each incremental point with 3% at the max of the scale, effective from the 1st January 2024. The increases are fully pensionable. A further review of the pay scale, as set out in separate Company correspondence, will

take place to reduce the number of increments and increase the starting pay, in the interest of recruitment and retention of staff.

C&D Postal Operatives without a Change Allowance

- A 3% change allowance effective from 1st July 2024;
- Additional 2% change allowance effective from 1st January 2025;
- The 3% will be consolidated on 1st January 2025; and
- The 2% will be consolidated on 1st January 2026.

These payments **also** apply to Indoor Administrative Operatives not in receipt of a change allowance.

Cleaners/Patrols

Consolidation of 2.5% Change Allowance backdated to 1st January 2022.

Working Leader

Consolidation of 2.5% Change Allowance effective 1st January 2023.

Delivery Service Managers

Revised Salary incorporating grade and performance pay as applies in the Clerical Admin, will be introduced from the 1st January 2024. Market movement will be paid which increases their pay by 0.7% from the 1st January 2023, bringing to a total of 3.2%.

e-Trike Routes

An allowance of €15 will attract to these posts (subject to meeting agreed criteria) on implementation of the redesign of the DSU.

Company Transformation

The agreement includes a major transformation programme across all aspects of the Company's business nationwide. The transformation changes have been agreed on the basis of sharing savings as agreed in the WRC pay agreement, in accordance with the previously accepted Labour Court Recommendation 21563. The changes will be implemented, with staff impact dealt with under the existing Change Agreements. Implementation and verification of the savings will be overseen by the Monitoring Group.

Retail, Corporate Centre & Clerical Administration

Agreement to relocate to the EXO was contained in the WRC pay agreement in 2021 with delays attributable primarily to COVID. In addition to the move, revised working, remote/hybrid working and all back-office functions, including State Savings, have been progressed primarily under Project Simplify. While not all staff at Company Headquarters will relocate to the EXO, the Union has ensured all members receive the full benefits. The Union has also agreed to convert 6 Company Branch Offices: 3 in Dublin and 3 in the provinces. The company has also agreed to engage further with the CWU on developing a career path, together with training and development supported by a robust Human Resource Management system.

Final Mile Transformation

A complete redesign of all Delivery Service Units will take place over an 18-month period commencing with the first 20 Offices on the 12th June 2023. The designs will be based on existing standards and methodology, taking into account the learnings from the Test & Learn exercise. The critical change in approach is the early local input in advance of the final design proposal being presented. The Test & Learn exercise confirmed that the technology captures the most up to date information. The revised local engagement process is 14 weeks from start to finish. It should be understood, as outlined in the C&D Agreement, *"It is management's responsibility to plan, organise and operate the business"*. The role of the Union is to sense check and validate the accuracy and ensure sufficient resources are in place to perform the work. The scale of the redesign schedule and timelines will be a major test for management. It will also be a

major undertaking for the CWU organisation, and while I'm certain of our ability to rise to the challenge.

Managers' Pay & Grade

The agreement completes a review of the pay and grade of Delivery Service Managers. Similar to the Clerical Admin Managers, they will move from a service-related incremental scale, to a performance-based pay model. Working Leaders are not included at this point, but they will have 2.5% of the Change Allowance consolidated with effect from 1st January 2023. Discussions on the Working Leader role and pay, as well as PAMs in Mail Centres, will commence by the end of Q3 2023. As part of this agreement, DSMs will receive an extra 0.7% pay, backdated to 1st January 2023. A review of CAD Operations, grades and pay, has begun and is expected to conclude within the next six months.

Cleaners/Patrols

Revised staffing associated with the move to the EXO and the temporary occupation of the GPO has been agreed. As opportunities arise, the company will engage third party suppliers to perform Cleaning and Patrols work. The Union will continue to engage with the company to ensure that any staff impact issues arising are addressed.

It is important to consider the outcome of discussions in the context of the postal sector internationally facing major challenges, with An Post reporting a loss for the last two years totalling €60m. It is critical that this be reversed going forward over the next couple of years.

Both parties have certainty to 2026 with a joint objective of a sustainable profitable company providing first class service to customers, together with decent pay, pension, and conditions of employment. Separately in the autumn we will commence discussion on a new cost of living pay deal.



Diarmuid in the swing of things!

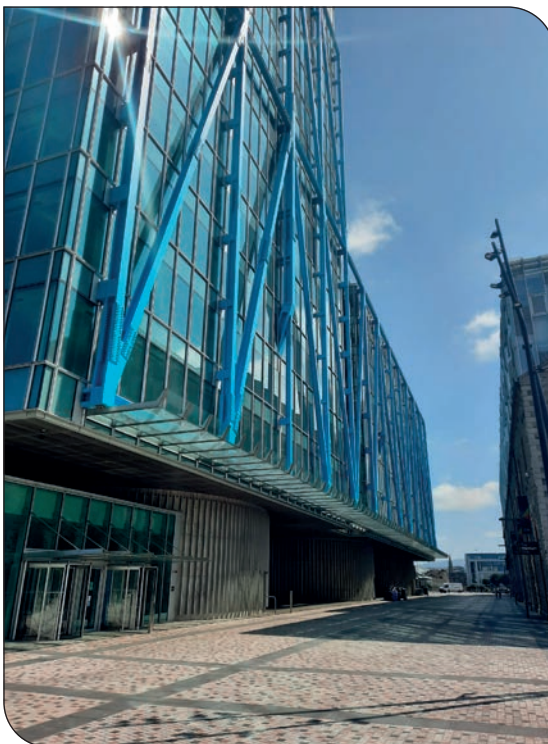


Branch Secretaries focussed one way.

Deteriorating Security in O'Connell Street Cited in An Post Planning Row

It seems the suitability and location are two key factors in the Company's decision to relocate to the EXO

Gordon Deegan for The Irish Times online – March, 2023



An Post GPO staff commenced relocation to the Company new Corporate Centre Headquarters at the EXO Building. The temporary occupation of a number of staff will remain for up to 18 months. The retail outlet, Philatelic and Museum will remain permanently based in the GPO.

YOUR UNION WORKING FOR YOU

In just over 12 months,
CWU delivered the following
for members in An Post:

- ✓ 5% Pay
- ✓ 10 % Pension
- ✓ Salary Review for Managers
- ✓ Consolidation of Productivity Allowances
- ✓ 5% Postal Operative
- ✓ 2.5% Cleaners, Patrols & Working Leaders
- ✓ 3% for Clerks
- ✓ Travel & Subsistence Increases
- ✓ Voucher €750

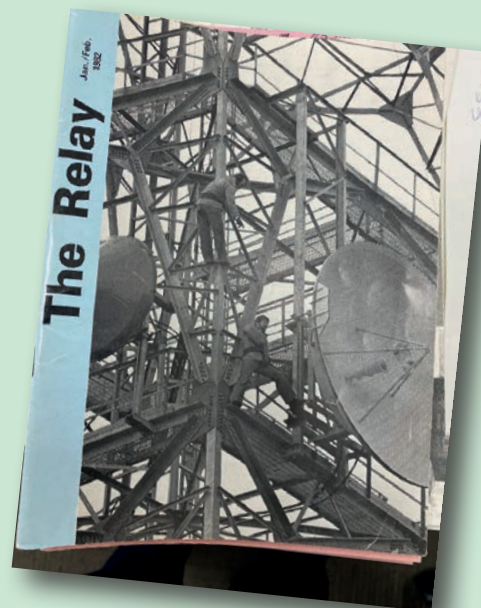


Looking for old copies of *The Relay*

CWU and FSU ladies all set for the VHI Women's Mini Marathon in aid of St Francis Hospice, AslAm and Breast Cancer Ireland



Pictured Left to right: Imelda, Jane Higgins (FSU), Ruth, Adrienne and Jelena



The Relay was the official journal of the Irish Post Office Engineering Union (IPOEU) and the Communication Union of Ireland (CUI) prior to its amalgamation with the PTWU in 1989 to form the CWU. It was initially published on an *ad hoc* basis and from 1967 it was published on a regular basis. As part of our archive we are looking to catalogue all *The Relay* published. Therefore, if anyone has any old copies could they forward them to Union Head Office for the attention of Pat Kenny. Thanking you in advance for any assistance.

Retirements from Limerick/Waterford Managers' Branch



Pictured Left to right: Stan Rogers, Vinny Kilroy, Brendan Malone, Mary Rogers and Christy Bromell



Colin Moore Retires

Elaine Bermingham presents Colin with his Cú Chulainn Statue.

Colin Moore recently celebrated his retirement from An Post following 43 years of unstinting service. Colin commenced working in An Post as a Boy Messenger in 1979 and also worked on the T.P.O. (Travelling Post Office). Colin immediately became a member of the Union and the Dublin Postal Clerks Branch. He served on the Branch Committee for a number of years until his promotion to Overseer where he served as Branch Secretary of the Dublin Postal Managers Branch.

Colin brought his vast wealth of knowledge to the Union and was a key figure in discussions on the new reward structures for Managers. In recent years he was also tasked with facilitating discussions between

the Staff Side and members of Project Simplify. During COVID he also acted as the Lead Worker Representative for the GPO and in that role he oversaw the return to the workplace of members as well as ensuring adherence to all COVID 19 protocols.

Colin's retirement function took place upstairs in Briody's and was attended by his family, friends and colleagues. The large attendance was testament to the esteem in which Colin is held by us all. We wish Colin many happy years of retirement and the best of luck as he continues to follow Dublin around the country when he isn't lying on the beach in Spain



John Lynam (Bantry Committee Representative), Breeda Galvin (Branch Secretary) and Tim Clifford (DSM) check the progress of the construction of Bantry DSU.

CWU No 1 Branch Members Retirements



No 1 Branch Members pictured at the NMC Citywest, after receiving their Unioni Scrolls from CWU President, Ivor Reynolds, and CWU No1 Branch Chairman, Will Meegan.

Back row l to r: Will Meegan, Kevin Hunt, Tom Reid, Paul Murphy, Seán Hogan, Brian Fogarty, Ivor Reynolds, John Kavanagh, John Counihan.

Front Row l to r: Ciarán Maher, Tom Flaherty, Joe Robinson, Joe Tyndall, Brian Conway, John Farrell, Peter Dowd, Larry Brennan.

Dean Lane Retires



John Sharkey, Branch Secretary Castlerea, makes a Presentation to Dean Lane on behalf of his colleagues, on the occasion of his retirement as Mail Contractor at Castlerea DSU.

John Hardiman Retires



Jonathan Hardiman receiving his Union Scroll and Badge after 44 years' service from CWU Dublin No.2 Branch Secretary, John Dunleavy.

Waterford Postal Branch Retirements



Waterford Postal Branch Officers with the retirees:

Anthony (Penny) Horan, Chris Jones, Bill Colfer (Regional Officer), Pat Byrne, Peter O'Dwyer (Branch Secretary), Paddy Hennessey, Michael O'Mathuna, Peter O'Sullivan & Jason Caulfield (NEC).



Michael O'Mathuna (49 years' service).



Paddy Hennessey (22 years' service).



Pat Byrne (28 years' service).



Peter O'Sullivan (35 years' service)



Pictured l to r: Paul McTiernan (Carrick-on-Shannon CWU Branch Committee Member), Michael Gallagher (Boyle DSU), and Eddie Heslin, (Carrick-on-Shannon CWU Branch Chairperson).

Michael Gallagher Bids Farewell

Michael Gallagher, Postal Operative Boyle DSU, retired on 30th September last. Michael delivered to the people of Dooastle, Ballymote, Co Sligo for over twenty years.

He was very popular both with the customers on his route and by work colleagues in Boyle DSU, (later consolidated into Dooastle DSO in 2018). A great night was had by all who crossed the Mayo border into Benson's Bar & Lounge in Roosky recently to celebrate Michael's retirement.

County Roscommon postman thanked at inquest for 'going above and beyond the call of duty'

An article regarding the great work of our colleague, Paddy Sharkey in Castlerea DSU, was published by the Roscommon Herald on Sunday, January 22, 2023, and highlights the importance of Postal Operatives in rural Ireland.

The role of a community Postman was praised at a recent inquest into the death of a man whose body was found at his front door.

The deposition of Postman, Paddy Sharkey, to the inquest in Ballaghaderreen recalled how he was

delivering morning mail when he discovered a man lying slumped at the front door porch of his house on October 6th, 2021. Mr Sharkey, who then rang the Gardaí, said that the man often lived in the UK but came home regularly.

The Coroner praised the role of the Community Postman, Paddy Sharkey.

"Rural communities depend on people like you, and I want to thank you for going above and beyond the call of duty" he said.





Seán Frayne Retires

Seán Frayne from the Dublin Postal Clerks' Branch, who retired recently, met with some of Santa's colleagues to celebrate the occasion.

Pictured l to r:

Pat Kenny, (Bernard Chief Elf), Willie Mooney (Bushy Evergreen Elf), Seán Frayne (the Man himself), Dave Bell (Alabaster Snowball Elf), and Colin Moore (Wunorse Openslae Elf).



Seán says:

***"We're really blessed in CWU.
To have such Professional Women as you two.
Forget Begg, Scanlon and McDonagh as well.
The real work is done by Lolly and Mel.***

***Thanks to the ladies I greatly admire.
As I bid farewell as now I retire.
But I'll be back if only because.
To be there as Santa, it's in my Clause."***



The Elves get ready for Santa's Party!



*Santa meets a
delighted
Charley Cronin
to tell her she is **not**
on the
Naughty List!*

Willie Mooney says:

***"Seán Frayne has retired
Forty four years ago he was hired.
An Post said adios,
But his CWU comrades and friends still hold him close.***

***As a Post Office Clerk he was much admired,
But as a Poet, Clairevoyant, Santa, Troubadour,
He will continue to be our Frayner
We won't be saying au revoir.***

***A CWU stalwart he keeps us all proud, strong and together.
The very best of luck in your busy retirement, Seán,
From us all in CWU & An Post forever."***



Santa keeps up his hard work during COVID

Anthony Byrne Retires



Bray Postal Branch Secretary, Darren Clucas, presents Anthony Joseph Byrne with his Union Scroll following his recent retirement. We wish Anthony all the best for a long and happy retirement.

Martin O'Connor Retires



Dublin Postal Clerks' Branch, Martin O'Connor, who retired recently from the GPO, pictured after the presentation of his Union Scroll.

Dublin Mails Managers' Branch Retirements



The Dublin Mails Managers' Branch held its annual function in the Teachers' Club at which they celebrated the retirement of their colleagues in the past year.

Pictured from left to right: Kevin McArthur (DSM DSU 9), Brendan Stanley, Marie Martin and Dave Farrell, who all worked as PAMs in the Dublin Mail Centre. Also in picture are Frank Burke, Branch Secretary, Pat Hawkins, Branch Treasurer, and Paul Keenan, Branch Chairman.

Dublin No. 2 Retirements

There were a number of retirements recently at Dublin No. 2.

Kevin Maloney, Thomas Leen, Joseph Galvin, Willie Collins and Willie Reilly each received their Union Scrolls and Badges from Branch Committee members and colleagues. They are all wished the very best for a long and happy retirement!



Christy Bromell Retires



The Ennis Postal Members would like to wish Christy Bromell a long and happy retirement after 44 years' service. Christy being presented with his Union Scroll and Badge by Leonard Coote, Ennis Postal Branch Chairman. Christy will be missed by all in Ennis and CWU Headquarters.

Michael Cleary Retires



Seán and Paul making a presentation to Michael Cleary on his retirement from Galway DSU.

Galway Postal Donation



Paul and Damien donate surplus toys from Galway Postal kids Christmas party to St Bernadette's Children's Unit, UCHG.



Galway Postal Supports Carmel Heery PO

Galway Postal held a Coffee Morning in Galway DSU in September to support Carmel Heery PO, who was part of the Irish Women's Deaf Futsal Football Team who travelled to the European Championships in Italy in October. Huge congratulations to Carmel and her team mates, who qualified for the World Cup Tournament next year.

Bill Bell visits Peterswell National School



Bill Bell, Galway Area Managers' Branch, recently went to meet the pupils of Peterswell National School 3 Junior years. Bill brought the Post Box from An Post which the pupils could use to post their letters to Santa, while trying to recruit the next generation of CWU members.

Brian Twomey Retires



Jon Mummery Galway Postal and colleagues make a presentation to Brian Twomey on his retirement from Gort DSO.

Joan Collins TD Retires



Dublin Postal Clerks member, Joan Collins TD, was presented with her Union Scroll by Willie Mooney, NEC & Dublin Postal Clerks Branch, at a function in Briody's to mark her retirement. The Branch wish Joan every success in the future.

John O'Reilly Retires



John O'Reilly, Dublin Postal Managers' Branch, retired recently and was presented with his Union Scroll by Ken Colgan, Branch Secretary, at a function in Briody's. We wish John and Concepta all the best for a long and happy retirement.

Westport Postal Branch Retirements



A section of Westport CWU Branch at their recent AGM where Presentations were made to George Reilly and Joe Sheridan, marking their retirements.



George Reilly (left) and Joe Sheridan (right) from the Westport Postal Branch receiving Presentations to mark their retirements from local TD, Michael Ring, who was a guest of the Branch at their recent AGM. Both are wished long and happy retirements by their friends and colleagues in Westport

Timmy O'Keefe Retires



Timmy O'Keefe, DSM Dunshaughlin DSU, retired recently. Timmy served on the Dublin Postal Inspectors Branch Committee and as Branch Secretary for a number of years. The Branch made a Presentation to Timmy, and Barney Cronin presented him with his Cuchulainn Statue on behalf of the Company.

Derek Deely Gets Married!



Congratulations to newly-weds Eilish and Derek Deely (Postman at Gort Co. Galway), pictured with their baby, Gráinne, after their Wedding Ceremony at Doon, Co.Limerick.

Also seen in the photo are Derek's parents, Gretta and Pat Deely (retired Postman in Gort).

Naas AGM Acknowledgements



Pictured with General Secretary, Seán McDonagh, at Naas Postal AGM are Marie Kelly and Patricia (Trish) Power, having received Branch Presentations & Bouquets in recognition of long & loyal service as Naas Chairperson & Treasurer respectively for many years.



Colm Doherty Retires

Colm Doherty, Carndonagh DSO, received his retirement Union Scroll from Union Headquarters on Thursday 16th February 2023 after 23 years' service with An Post. Colm delivered in the Carndonagh area of Inishowen. The Lifford/Inishowen Branch would like to take this opportunity to wish Colm and his family all the best for the future.

Pictured L-R: Michael Gallagher, Branch Secretary, Colm Doherty, Postal Operative, and Seamus McLaughlin, Branch Chairperson.



Richard McEnery Retires

Presentation of the Union Scroll and Badge to Richard McEnery, Field Support Centre, Tralee, after 42 years' service, by Jer Daly, Limerick District Chairman.

Kevin Mundy Retires

Hugh Quinn, Branch Secretary Donegal S.W., presented the Union Scroll and Gold Badge to Kevin Mundy, on his retirement from Donegal DSU. He will be missed by all who have had the pleasure of working with him and wish him well in his retirement. We would like to thank Kevin for his contributions at Branch meetings.



Dessie Farrell – He's Gonna Be Missed!

Maith sibh Scoil Íosagáin - a lovely tribute to our No. 1 Postman. When it's your last letter to deliver and it's addressed to yourself for all the good you did in your community and school.

All the children and teachers are going to miss him so much and wish him the VERY BEST OF LUCK!



THE LAST POST

Ger O'Connor Retires from An Post after 35 Years

Article published by kind permission of The Westmeath Topic

Following almost four decades of service, Mullingar Post Office on Dominick Street bade farewell to one of its most popular staff members recently.

Mullingar man, Ger O'Connor, delivered his final letter on Monday, 6 February and with his final delivery was the end of a chapter 35 years in the making.

Prior to working for An Post, Ger worked as a dough maker at Mullally's Bakery on Dominick Street. When the bakery closed in the late 80s, he began delivering mail through the letterboxes of north Westmeath. "After Mullally's closed I applied for a job with An Post," said Ger. "Thankfully they took me on for two days a week. People were telling me I should get a job working in a factory, but I enjoyed the lifestyle with An Post, and I felt like I was my own boss."



Joe O'Connor presents his father Ger with a commemorative piece of Genesis fine art, following his retirement from An Post.

Ger continued working with An Post on a temporary basis until he was invited to begin working full-time at the age of 35. "I was called into the office and Management were offering me the full-time job and at the same time talking about pensions. At 35 you don't really think about pensions, but from then until now it has flown by."

Once firmly rooted with An Post on a full-time basis, Ger arranged for his eldest son, Shane, to apply for a position as a summer postman. "He came on board and he took to it like a duck to water. One time I came home and discovered that he'd been in bed since 11am.

"When I woke him and asked what he'd done with the mail, he said he had it all delivered! In later years he began training people on the road, and they couldn't keep up with him, he was just super fit."

Ger's youngest son Joe later then came on board on a temporary basis. "He really liked it. He was working with his brother and they were able to get into work early on a Friday, finish their shifts, and hit the road for the weekend to football matches in England."

Unlucky

Tragedy would later hit the O'Connor family in 2009, when Shane O'Connor passed away from cancer, aged 27. "It came out of nowhere. At the time, I said to the consultant in the hospital that there wasn't a history of cancer in the family, and his blunt answer was: 'There is now.'

"He was just unlucky. Shane caught the wrong bus. It was a dark time in our lives, and it's always with you. He was a great character."

The only one of Ger's three sons who decided not to opt for a position with An Post was Martin, who works as a mechanic at Grange Motors, Mullingar. "He's an excellent mechanic," says a proud Ger.

For the last 14 years of his time with An Post, Ger worked on the Mullingar-Ballinea route, and he recalls with fondness the people he met down through the years. "I got used to the people and they got used to me. I'd great banter with people I'd meet on the route.

"The public like to see the postman or postwoman. It's one of the last few services that actually calls to people. Older people might not see anyone for days, so it's always nice for them to have someone calling with the post."

The important role of the local postal worker came to the fore in 2020, during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. For Ger and his colleagues at An Post, it was a task they took great pride in.



Ger O'Connor at Mullingar Post Office



Ger with his wife Eileen at his Retirement Party at Mullingar Post Office.

"COVID put An Post right out there on the frontline. We were regarded as essential workers, and it was great for customers, in particular those living outside of town," Ger said.

"A lot of elderly customers were terrified to leave their homes. I used to pick up a few messages for customers, and I even placed a few bets in the bookies for customers! I even picked up a bag of cement for another man, who was badly stuck. We helped people out, in what was a very dark time."

Great Fondness

While working for An Post, Ger proudly served in the FCA, a time in his life he looks back on with great fondness. He maintains that it should never have been stood down. *"I made terrific friends while I was in the FCA. It was an amazing organisation. I met hundreds of people while I was in it."*

"It was a fantastic recruitment base for the army. Towns like Mullingar which had a military presence could recruit from the Reserves. You got a certain amount of discipline in the FCA. You learned how to respect authority, uniform and the Irish flag. That isn't there in society anymore, and it's sad."

Ger has been active in a campaign to have the contingent of the Irish Army's Battalion who were present in the 1961 siege of Jadotville recognised. *"We never heard about and no one ever spoke about it, but what happened to those men is an absolute shame. It's a black mark on successive governments, the way they were treated."*

Ger is pushing for a commemorative monument to be unveiled in Mullingar. *"Some of those men were nominated for bravery medals and to this day, they haven't received them. Others have have gone to their graves without proper recognition. It's not right."*

Snooker

For Westmeath Topic readers who are fans of our sports section, the name Ger O'Connor will be familiar to one Mullingar club – St Mary's Snooker Club – which Ger has been a member of since he was 18. He's currently Secretary of the club and takes pride in how it has become part of Mullingar for many year. *"It's been tough at times. All we charge is a membership fee for the year and then €1 for 15 minutes. It's for nothing, but we're not there to make a profit."*

"We've got on well there and we run it as best we can. It's a great facility for the town."

Now happily-retired, Ger looks forward to spending some quality time with his wife Eileen, as well his children and grandchildren. With family members living abroad, he hopes to take to the air in the coming months and years and do some travelling.

Closer to home, he will be busy working on commemorative publications for the Irish Defence Forces in the coming months. An accomplished author, he published a 140-page book on medals of the Irish defence forces in October 2021.

His claim to fame is that a copy of the book is in Buckingham Palace, at the request of the late Prince Philip during the visit to Ireland of both himself and his wife, Queen Elizabeth II, in 2011.

In a parting word, Ger said that he is grateful for the opportunities An Post has give to both him and his family. *"Working with the Post Office gave us a good standard of living and while times were sometimes tough, it allowed us to rear our family."*

While Ger's retirement from An Post marks the end of one chapter for the O'Connor family, it also marks the beginning of a new chapter for Ger's youngest son, Joe, who by coincidence was transferred from Tullamore to Mullingar, to take up the senior role of Delivery Service Manager on the same week as his father's retirement.

"It was strange that my first week back in Mullingar was his last week in Mullingar," said Joe. "I'm delighted for him, and that he's able to go out with good health. He's plenty of grandchildren to keep him busy as well."

"It'll be sad not to see him around the place, but after 35 years he was nearly part of the furniture!"



Dublin Postal Delivery Branch Retirements



*Sam Deegan,
Balbriggan DSU.*



*Tomás MacElliott,
Crumlin DSU.*



*Colm O'Toole,
Ballyfermot DSU.*



*John Hayes,
Fortfield DSU.*



*Joe Gaynor (left), Blanchardstown DSU, receives his
Union Scroll from Branch Representative,
Derek Lordan.*



*Deco Corbett (right), Branch Representative,
presents Phil Kane (left), DSU 17,
with his Union Scroll.*



Thomas Galligan (L), Foxrock DSU, receiving his Union Scroll, from Keith Butler, Assistant Secretary, DPDB.



Ann Miller, Balbriggan DSU.



Colleagues, past & present, celebrate Mick Doherty's (Branch Representative, Rathmines DSU) well-deserved retirement.



Noel O'Toole, Glenageary (centre), who received his Union Scroll from Branch Secretary, Frank Donohoe (left). and Local Representative, Greg Mulhall (right).



Branch Secretary, Frank Donohoe, with former Vice-Chairman, Liam Keenan, and Andy (Liam's son).. A great night was had by all in Birchall's Pub, Crumlin to celebrate Liam's retirement.



Damian Duignan Retires

Deborah Flannery with former Chairman, Damian Duignan, who was presented with a gift by Aaron Molloy, Sligo District Chairman, to mark his retirement from eir and the Branch.

John Moran Retires



Pictured above from left to right:

Limerick District Branch Members Tom Stack, Dave Kennelly, Tom Hayes NEC, John Moran with his Union Scroll Presentation, Jim Stack and Ger Regan.

Pictured right:

Tom Hayes, who presented John Moran with his Union Scroll, and David Moriarty, eir FLM.



Jimmy O'Keeffe – Still blowing strong at ninety-three!



Jimmy O'Keeffe pictured with his son, Eamon.

Jimmy O'Keeffe is the longest-serving member of the Communications Workers' Union Band. The ninety-three year old bass clarinet player has been into music from a very young age. He initially trained in the Irish School of Music on Chatham Row, close the Gaiety Theatre. Like most struggling musicians, he found it difficult to earn a living and worked in the clothing industry with his good friend, the late Sonny Knowles, before forming his own band, **The Panama Showband**. "They were great times," says Jimmy, who travelled the highways and byways of Ireland during the showband era. Such was his love of music that, despite having his own band, he also joined the Post Office Workers' Union Band. You had to work in the Post Office to be in the band in those days, but Jimmy managed to get in through his brother-in-law, Tom Byrne, who worked as a sorter on the Travelling Post Office (TPO).

The band's outfit at the time was the Postman's uniform, so Jimmy became an "honorary Postman". Since then he has continued to play with the band and, over sixty years later, he is still blowing strong at 93 years young. His love of music was passed on to his son Eamon, who plays flute in the Communications Workers' Union Band.



Jimmy showing us how it should be played!

Roscommon CWU Branch Retirements



Roscommon Postal Branch organised a Presentation in Hannon's Hotel recently, to mark the retirement of eight staff members from Roscommon DSU and RLB Centre.

Pictured from left to right: (Front Row): David Kearney, Angela Rowntree, Helen Boyle and Michael Meeley
(Back Row): John Tansey, Regional Officer CWU, Pat O'Brien, Kevin Walker, Michael Lohan, Coman Shiel and Gerry Keogh, Chairperson, Roscommon CWU.

(Photo – Gerard O'Loughlin Photography.)

Mary King Retires

Mary King retired from Longford DSU on 31st of March 2023 after nearly 30 years' service. (Her husband, Brendan, who retired a couple of years previously, had been Branch Secretary for many years.) Mary will be a huge loss to the Branch for many reasons (including feeding us!!), but her hard work will be missed the most.

Mary and Brendan intend to spend their retirement with their kids and grandkids and, no doubt, Brendan will enjoy getting a round of golf in from time to time!



THE MONDAY CLUB



What is the Monday Club all about?

It began 30 years ago with two lifelong friends who worked in the post office and one of them took early retirement due to a health scare. They had been involved in a lot of social activities both inside and outside of their employment. For some people, retirement can be a traumatic time, especially if they have been socially interactive with people. The two friends decided to meet up every Monday afternoon for a chat and continue their friendship. Word soon got around about these popular friends meeting up every Monday in a bar (me being the first to meet up with them after work that is). Gradually there was a build-up of friends calling in for a drink and a chat. We decided to move to a more central place as the number of people joining us increased. We settled on Home Farm Football Club, which allows us to use it every Monday and so the birth of the idea became the *Home Farm Monday Club*.

We soon realised it was in some way a lifesaver for many who found retirement a bit difficult to adjust to; it helped members who may have had little or no contact with anyone or lived alone. When COVID hit, it was harder, I think, for the members who were alone, so a Whatsapp Group was set up to stay connected with each other. We began to meet up in the local parks for short walks and a chat. But COVID also showed us that some members were looking forward to their retirement.

Music and song, as well as friendship, is the main ingredient for our continuity over the last 30 years, all provided by the members of the Monday Club. And, out of all this was born "a choir of sorts". The Choir has performed at various events connected to An Post. We have sung at funeral services for members and their

families who have passed away. The choir continue to perform in the many care homes in the Dublin area, which brings immense pride and joy to all of us. Day trips are organised for members of the Monday Club and some weekends away. We hold a special mass each January for deceased members of the club and their families are invited to come along. Food and refreshments are provided, compliments of the Monday Club. In December we hold many fundraising events, dinner, raffles, etc and the Choir do some carol singing outside the GPO in Dublin's O'Connell Street, with the monies raised going to Saint Luke's Cancer Hospital Fund. Along with these events during the year, we have birthday parties and celebrate the life of any member who has passed away.

In my humble opinion, all the above has benefited our members in some small way. But none of this would have happened were it not for the great friendship of Michael O'Connor and the late Patrick Redmond (Porry). A clinical psychologist on a visit to Dublin last year heard about the Monday Club from a taxi friend and she paid a visit to conduct an interview for a radio station in England. She felt that what we do is excellent for mental wellbeing. I am sharing this story with you, as it might encourage other retired members to come along and join us or to maybe start up something of their own. On a personal note, I want to thank the CWU for all the support throughout the years.

The Monday Club meet in the bar in Home Farm Football Club from 3.00 p.m. – so why not call in and say hello?

Regards

Christy Brannigan

Remembering Martin Kavanagh RIP

Husband of Jane
(Halligan Insurance)



It is with a heavy heart that I inform the membership of the sudden and sad passing of Martin Kavanagh, the beloved husband of our dear colleague Jane Kavanagh.

Martin was struck down too soon, as a loving father to Ben (16) and Katie (13) and a committed husband to Jane, where they first met in college in Newcastle 20 years before.

He will live on in the hearts of his family and friends who will forever remember his dry wit and great sense of humour, along with the phenomenal salesperson he was and how much he loved his golf and adored his beautiful family.

It is often said in sales; that people buy from people. I've no doubt that the secret to Martin's sales success lay with his wit and intellect paired with a healthy dose of no-nonsense empathy to repeatedly solve his customers problems, to whom he will also be sorely missed.

We are truly heartbroken for Jane, who has been a highly valued member of the Halligan Insurance team for over 15 years. Over the many years, Jane has worked tirelessly on behalf of our fellow CWU members, who themselves were dealing with their own tragedies and hardships.

Our hearts, prayers and tears are with Jane, Ben, and Katie along with Martin's family; now and always.

May he rest in peace.

Brian Halligan

José Oliveira RIP



It is with great regret that we learned of the death of our comrade, José Oliveira, from SNTCT Portugal.

From an early age, he embraced the cause of defending workers, having held various positions in the SNTCT bodies. A comrade of enormous generosity, always supportive and with a friendly word. A fighter

who sought to convey hope in the most difficult moments of the fight for a better world. Your fight for the appreciation of work and workers will be maintained.

José was the Union Chair of the European Social Dialogue Committee. He was a prominent contributor to the UNI Conference held in Dun Laoghaire.

Presentation of Union Scroll and Badge for the late Maurice Sheehy R.I.P.



Our colleague, Maurice Sheehy, of Clonakilty Headquarters, passed away suddenly on the 21st December, 2020. Maurice was a well-respected member of the 510 team, who had a unique sense of humour which made working with him a pleasure. He is sadly

missed by his family and colleagues.

Maurice's Union Scroll and Badge were presented by Dermot Hayes, Chairman Bandon, Clonakilty and Macroom Section, to his wife, Maureen, and his son, Mark, at a recent function.



Anne McCay R.I.P.

It was with shock and great sadness that we heard of the death of our friend and colleague, Anne McCay. Anne passed away suddenly at her home on Good Friday the 7th April last. Anne spent the last 21 years in An Post, working out of Lifford DSU. Anne was a good natured person with a heart of gold. She never had a bad word to say about anyone. She will be sorely missed in the office. She will be especially missed by her extended family and friends. The Lifford/Inishowen Branch would like to take this opportunity to extend its sincere sympathies to Anne's family and friends.

'Ar dheis De go raibh an h'anam'



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Did You Know?

We are pleased to advise that we launched three courses, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and Microsoft PowerPoint. These courses have been produced courtesy of our colleagues in the CWU UK and we thank them for our continued collaboration and partnership. Further details of these three courses are on the **UNION link** website.