



Sixty reasons to sign up

Why Trade Unionists
should join Labour



www.amicustheunion.org

A Labour Party that works for Unite

The Labour Party was created over 100 years ago to promote the values and aspirations of trade union members. 100 years on Unite – Amicus Section recognises the importance of this well established relationship, working together to tackle low pay, unfairness in the workplace and to improve the lives of everyone.

Political decisions impact on union members on a daily basis, whether they be on pensions, employment policy, schools or the NHS. Today, the Labour movement is at a central moment as it looks forward a fourth term in Government.

Over the last 10 years, the Labour Government has made a real difference in our schools, in the workplace, in hospitals, for families and in all our communities. With Labour we have a stronger, fairer society. But Labour can and should do more. There has never been a more important time for Unite – Amicus Section members to join the Labour Party. By joining the Labour Party you can help shape a future Labour Government, ensuring that it recognises and delivers on the issues that really matter to ordinary trade union members.

Sixty reasons to sign up:

A snapshot of what Labour has done

1. Brought in a Minimum wage. The main rate for workers over 22 is now £5.35 an hour, with 18-21 year olds at £4.35 an hour. This will go up again in October 2007 to £5.52 and £4.60 respectively.
2. Established a Minimum Wage for young workers aged 16-17, currently at a rate of £3.30 per hour and set to go up to £3.40 in October 2007.
3. A commitment to continue to encourage employers to view the National Minimum Wage as a legal minimum and to aspire to pay well above this rate.
4. Extended paid maternity leave to 36 weeks.
5. Introduced paid paternity leave of two weeks for new fathers.
6. Adoptive parents have gained six months paid and six months unpaid parental leave.
7. Delivered 50 new employment rights since 1997.
8. Every worker now has the right to join a trade union and must be informed of this right.
9. Labour restored trade union rights to workers at GCHQ within 13 days of coming to power.
10. Unemployment at lowest level since 1975
11. The New Deal has helped over 1.2million people into work, including 535,000 young people.
12. Equality on pensions for same sex partners
13. Introduced Civil Partnerships for same sex partners
14. 1 million new childcare places
15. Tax Credits have lifted 600,000 children out of poverty.
16. Created Child Trust Funds, delivering £250 to every baby, and £500 for the babies of low income families. Children receive extra payments when they reach seven and again when they are at secondary school.
17. Tax-free Childcare Vouchers of £50 a week for each working parent; worth over £1,000 a year when both parents are in work.
18. Funding up £1,000 per school pupil since 1997.
19. Union Learning Fund has supported 490 projects in 3,000 workplaces, helping 100,000 workers improve their skills.
20. Students from low income families receive £11,000 in non-repayable cash (a bursary of £1,000 and an annual £2,700 grant) over the course of a full time 3 year degree.
21. New Education Maintenance Allowances benefiting 27,000 young people from low income families who stay on in education after 16.
22. Well over half a million more adults now participate in further education than in 1997.

23. Record number of police officers.
24. Introduced Community Support Officers.
25. Banned the sale of spray paint to under 16's to curb graffiti.
26. Given police more powers to close disorderly pubs and to seize alcohol from on street drinkers.
27. Over 4000 Anti-Social Behaviour Orders issued.
28. Expanding the use of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders to be used to tackle anti-social behaviour in and around frontline workplaces.
29. Brought in new dispersal orders to prevent gangs from gathering.
30. Banned fox hunting and fur farming.
31. Lifted 1.9 pensioners out of poverty since 1997.
32. Introduced free local bus travel for every pensioner throughout the UK.
33. Free TV licences for pensioners aged 75 or over.
34. Introduced free passports for 4.5million senior citizens aged 75 or over.
35. Restored free eye tests to 6.6 million pensioners.
36. A £200 council tax refund for every pensioner household aged 65 and over, paid alongside the Winter Fuel Allowance.
37. Around 12 million pensioners are benefiting from the annual £200 Winter Fuel Payment, with pensioners over 80 receiving a further £100.

38. The Pension Credit guarantees everyone aged 60 and over an income of at least £119.05 a week if they are single or £181.70 a week for pensioner couples.
39. Minimum State Pension is now £87.30 for single pensioners and £139.60 for pensioner couples – a rise of £67.70 and £108.20 respectively since 1997.
40. £10 million pounds 'Heroes' Return Scheme' enables Second World War veterans to return to the areas where they saw active service.
41. Free entry to all national museums and galleries.
42. Funded internet access at all public libraries.
43. More than doubled international aid since 1997 to £3.8 million in 2005 and rising to £6.5 billion in 2007.
44. Banned the use, export and production of anti personnel landmines.
45. Introduced the International Development Act outlawing the use of British aid for any purpose other than poverty reduction.
46. UK is contributing £70 million pounds each year for 10 years to the International Finance Facility for Immunisation – saving 10 million lives from measles, polio, hepatitis B, tetanus, and diphtheria.
47. Increased Research and Development investment to 2.5% of national income.
48. Introduced and increased workplace support for Trade Union Learning Representatives.

49. Brought in Skills Agenda, meaning the expansion of apprenticeships, the rolling out of Employer Training Pilots for all up to NVQ2 and setting a target of trebling the number of Union Learning Reps to 22,000.
50. Protection from dismissal for strikers raised from 8 to 12 weeks.
51. NHS waiting lists at their lowest for 10 years.
52. Created NHS Direct, helping 2.5 million people each year.
53. Brought back matrons to hospital wards.
54. Cut cancer death rates faster than anywhere else in the world for breast cancer in women and lung cancer in men.
55. There are now 32,000 more doctors and 85,000 more nurses than in 1997.
56. Over 625 new one-stop health care centres have been created since 2001, by 2008 there will be 750 centres in local communities providing family doctors alongside healthcare services such as a pharmacy, blood testing service or physiotherapy
57. Built over 80 NHS walk-in centres across the country.
58. Delivered £1 billion Neighbourhood Renewal Fund to the 100 most deprived areas in the country to help improve quality of life and create stronger communities.
59. Given local authorities new powers to clamp down on abandoned cars, graffiti, noise pollution and other environmental concerns.
60. Stronger powers and penalties to deal with problems such as fly tipping that blight our local areas.

Sign up today and have your say!

How Labour Party members can influence Government policy

There has never been a more exciting and influential time to join the Labour Party. The Labour Party is at a pivotal point, as a new leader and deputy leader are elected with fresh ideas and different views on how to take the party forward. Unite – Amicus Section believes that involving trade union members with the policy making process of the Labour Party is vital and is committed to ensuring that trade union voices are heard in the Labour Party across the country, as well as in Westminster.

As a member of the Labour Party you can... select local representatives

Labour Party members have the right to fully participate in the selection of their local MP and councillors. In addition, there are numerous opportunities to get involved with community activities and to make a real difference to your local area.

As a member of the Labour Party you can... shape future policy

As a part of the Labour Party, you can help mould the policies that will go on to form part of Labour's next election manifesto, bringing in your ideas and the hopes and concerns of your family, friends and colleagues.

After the Warwick agreement that formed the basis of the Labour Party's 2005 election manifesto, the Party's policy formation process has now started over. From now until the next General Election the Labour Party National Policy Forum (NPF) will look at submissions from workplaces, unions, Constituency Labour Parties (CLPs) and the wider community.

The first stage of the policy forum process took place in 2006 with the 'Lets Talk' debate which considered the big challenges that faces the Labour Party as it develops policy.

Now in 2007, a number of policy choices have emerged from the initial consultations, that will consider either specific policy areas, or where appropriate, cross-cutting themes. The results of this will then be sent to a third stage where they will be considered at a meeting of a 'Warwick type' National Policy Forum. The 'final' draft documents in 2008 will be circulated more widely.

As a member of the Labour Party you can... get involved with key events

As a member of the Labour Party *you* are a vital part of this policy making process – as a trade unionist *your* ideas and experiences are invaluable in ensuring any future policy is representative of the interests of ordinary members. You can get involved with, or even organise, local or regional policy forums and events producing submissions for the National Policy Forum. Working through National Policy Forum representatives – every member has representatives from both the constituencies and trade unions - members will be entitled to submit amendments and have them considered at the 'Warwick stage' of the National Policy Forum.

As a member of Unite and the Labour Party you can... have a stronger voice

At every National Policy Forum that has taken place since the General Election Unite – Amicus Section has attended and contributed to the debate. Through the "Lets talk" initiative the union has placed a number of submissions which will be considered by the National Policy Forum

Now is the time for Amicus members to join up and join in with the future of the Labour Party and the future of Britain. Be a part of it and sign up to the Labour Party today.