

Posted to all HFC members in Birmingham, and hand delivered across Camden House by our wonderful members.



HFC OR HSBC?

If you now work for HSBC but have received this newsletter, it is vital you contact this office as soon as possible. This is because you are listed on our membership system as still working for HFC. If so, please call Gina on 569 8900 and we will update our records.

Union recognition at Edmund Street now applies to all HSBC areas. Our members are now represented by our Reps Denise Frankham and Yvonne Corser. If you are interested in getting more involved with Unite at Edmund Street, please do contact either myself or our reps.

Issues – I am hearing about some extremely unfair “action contracts” for sickness that are of a legally dubious nature. Don’t be shy – if this or other aspects of life at Edmund Street are getting you down, think Unite.

UNITE NEWS IN CAMDEN HOUSE

We continue to press for union recognition at Camden House. The good news is that we believe we have sufficient members to force union recognition via the statutory procedure. The bad news is that we cannot progress this until we clear up our membership records – ie the Camden staff that transferred to HSBC Edmund St need to tell us. If or when you no longer work for HFC – please ring and tell us.

BANK ACCOUNTS

A number of members have reported that they have been pressured into opening a HSBC bank account. Although the bank has not made this compulsory, I do have reports of senior managers making refusal difficult. Please let me have the details if this has been your experience. Senior managers have been quoted as saying that they “cannot understand why any employee would not want a HSBC account”. Perhaps they need to get out more often!

UNITE LITERATURE

You have a legal right to distribute Unite membership forms and other Unite literature, eg Unite photocopied e-bulletins, newsletters etc. You may do this within the

workplace at Camden House – including desk-drops. There is nothing HFC can legally do about this so long as you undertake this activity when you are not actually paid to work, ie before or after your contractual hours, or during lunch time or a paid break.

THE FUTURE OF HFC BANK

Unite is aware of the acute stress and anxiety felt by our members as the bank continues its deliberations as to the future of the business.

Should the business close, if necessary we will lodge Protective Awards with the Tribunals for our members in HFC.

Although Unite well understands the difficult market conditions, there is clearly a limit as to how far HFC should reasonably take its cost cutting measures. For example, I draw your attention to the recent initiative in the Branch network that forces staff to pay for postage stamps when writing to customers. To underline the point, all franking machines have been taken away. These sorts of measures are as laughable as they are ridiculous, and risk bringing the HSBC Group into disrepute.

Lots of you appear to be losing trust in management, and I have spoken to several

of you who suspect that dubious practices will be used to dismiss people in order to save on redundancy pay. Whether these perceptions are at all fair remains to be seen, but these are very sad times indeed at Camden House.

WORKING HOURS

I have advised several members recently about changes to contract. Sometimes HFC like to try and change members’ working hours with little or no consultation, notice or regards to life outside work. At best, the instances I am aware of are legally dubious. Never accept any changes to your contract without first taking advice from Unite.

THE FUTURE – HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Make an unprotected non-member colleague aware of the need to join Unite.
- Be the eyes and ears of Unite – report injustice and unfairness to Unite.
- Consider getting more involved – Camden House needs a Union Rep!

Unite the union working for you in HFC Camden House
Rick Coyle, Unite Regional Officer