

News Update 3.10.09: Report from Past Branch President, Wendy Olsen - an Overview of 2008-09

During my period of office as union branch president (2008-09), we had to face a very stubborn management in numerous settings. We built up a stronger front with other unions, sat together with them and constructed joint documents. The difference a joint approach makes is great. We were not responsible for the HERA delays. On the contrary we were the main facilitating force pushing the process forward every week. We also pushed forward the fixed-term contract issue with at least 7 UCU officers working on this issue, sharing a common platform wherever we went within our huge University bureaucracy. I felt that progress was made for lecturers on the fixed-term front, but that research staff still faced the difficulty that there is not a career pathway and there is little job security for the incoming researchers yet. However it is very clear that equal treatment must be continually given to FTC and permanent researchers. On personal cases we had numerous successes. There were many big issues and the executive committee shared out the work very carefully and in a balanced way all year. I have now gone onto a sabbatical and I actually miss all that arguing and debating!!