

Welcome to issue 2 of **Informed** - the new NUJ newsletter bringing you news about key decisions taken by your National Executive Council (NEC).

The NEC is the governing body of the union between the annual conference. It is made up of representatives of geographical areas and industrial sectors and is elected by members.

A full list of NEC members is on the NUJ's website at [www.nuj.org.uk](http://www.nuj.org.uk) NEC members represent your interests. If there are any issues you think the NUJ should be taking up or handling differently get in touch with your NEC member - and if necessary lobby them.

It is important members make NEC members aware of their views. It is important NEC members keep members informed about their work on behalf of the union. That way the decisions we make and the way the union is run will continue to improve.

**Jeremy Dear**  
General Secretary  
**Tim Lezard**  
President

## SPEAKING OUT AGAINST JOB CUTS

Plans for a union-wide tour promoting investment in quality journalism and tackling the culture of cuts in editorial resources to fund shareholder greed were approved by the NEC. The campaign will include a series of public meetings, lobbies of MPs and media company events, research in to the profiteering of local newspapers, a petition and calls for a Select Committee investigation in to the state of the UK media, in particular its ownership.

A three-month tour later this year will take the message that if media companies want to win more readers, listeners and viewers then they must invest in quality journalism to the public. The tour, which will promote real investment in news, will stop at various towns and cities across the UK and Ireland, and be joined by local politicians, campaigners and senior journalists en route. The NEC endorsed the campaign arguing there is no better time for the union to let people know about the threat to their local news. By indiscriminately cutting journalists' jobs, in reality employers are cutting deep into the heart of local communities who rely on local media for their news.

The NEC fear the public is being kept in the dark about the impact these cuts will have. It is our hope that the campaign will shine a light on media owners profiteering at the expense of quality journalism which is going on.

Further details at [www.nuj.org.uk](http://www.nuj.org.uk)

### Exec backs BBC campaign

Executive members gave their full backing to BBC members fighting job cuts at the Corporation. Following the strike last May over BBC plans to cut up to 4000 jobs the union has been in intensive talks across all divisions to avoid compulsory redundancies and address concerns over quality and workload issues arising from the changes.

Successes have been achieved in many parts of the BBC but there remain some tough talks in the coming weeks.

NEC members backed a resolution welcoming the progress made but expressing concern that up to 225 staff could still face compulsory redundancy. BBC reps have said they will call further industrial action in the event of compulsory redundancies and the NEC pledged its full support for the action.

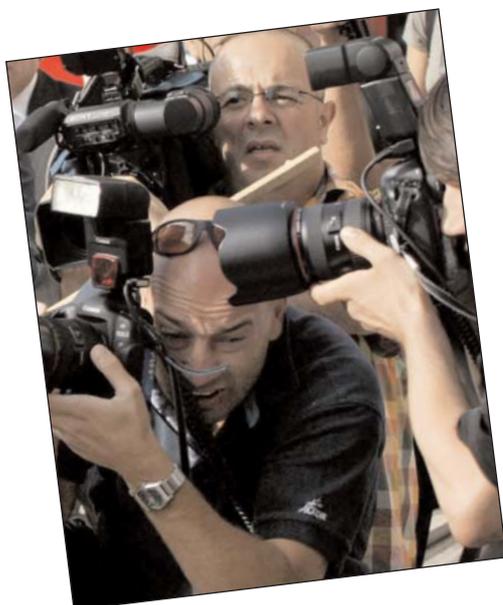
● The NEC approved a request to donate £1,000 to the Irish Congress of Trade Union's 'Threshold of Decency' campaign. The campaign, which was sparked from the Irish Ferries dispute, aims to protect workplace rights and standards for workers in the Republic. ● The NEC welcomed the support of the NUJ Parliamentary Group for a lobby of MPs over the proposed closure of ten language services and the BBC World Service. A further lobby is being organised on February 28. ● It was agreed to send £200 to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign to help organise their annual conference and to send a delegate to the TUC-sponsored Cuba Trade Union Solidarity Conference.

# Code for citizen contributors published

The NEC has agreed to publish the NUJ's Code of Practice on the use of witness contributors. The Code, which will be distributed around branches and chapels and published on our website, will set the standards for using 'witness' material.

NUJ President Tim Lezard said: "It is important the NUJ sets out its stall on this issue. The bottom line is that whilst we recognise there are often genuine reasons why citizen witness material will be used, if news outlets use material submitted by professional journalists – our members – they will receive it from a trusted source and be assured of its quality."

A full copy of the code is available at [www.nuj.org.uk](http://www.nuj.org.uk)



## NEC elections

Molly Cooper, Jim Corrigan, Nick Serpell and Phil Sutcliffe will serve as NEC members for London during 2006-7.

The four were elected from 8 candidates contesting the seat. They will be joined by Tim Dawson and Joyce McMillan who were elected as job-share candidates in the Freelance seat. All other seats were uncontested.

## NUJ is back in black!

The NEC heard that following the decisions taken at its last meeting to clear the union's debts following the sale of Acorn House last year the union was now operating in the black for the first time in three decades.

The NEC, which last year agreed the sale of former HQ Acorn House to the Terence Higgins Trust for £5m, agreed to clear the union's historic debts and invest the remaining £2.7m in equity, bonds and property.

A further £10,000 will be placed in a separate account to pay for any refurbishments needed at Headland House, the union's headquarters.

General Secretary Jeremy Dear said: Through the efforts of many treasurers, dedication from our NEC and staff and strict financial discipline we've now cleared debts which have beset this union for too many years. Now we are in a position to be able to plan ahead with confidence. "This will allow us to expand our campaigns and to better serve all our members."

● **The NEC welcomed a report from former ITV Central FoC John Mitchell who visited Indonesia on behalf of the International Federation of Journalists to meet journalists organisations who were badly hit by the effects of the Tsunami. The NUJ was the leading fundraiser as part of the IFJ's Tsunami appeal collecting tens of thousands of pounds.** ● **The union's solicitors Thompsons handled 149 cases for NUJ members in the 11 months to November 2005 securing £554,649.93 in damages.**

● **The NUJ is keeping up pressure on Amnesty International to express their concern at the level of violence against journalists around the world – 150 of whom died in 2005, yet only eight of whose deaths were investigated. Amnesty has been asked to campaign for governments to ensure crimes against journalists do not remain unpunished, that all violations and properly investigated and to hold to account those who commit such acts.**

● **A new group for on-line journalists is to be set up in London. The New Media sub-branch, which will draw its members from London Central Branch, expects to meet just before, and then join the 'parent' branch.**