prospect

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The Heritage Herald

Newsletter for NML Prospect members No. 3, Nov 2026.

Union week 2026 events for members and non-members

Monday. 12:00pm - 2:00pm Rosa and Claire Pilotage, Liner Meeting Room

Tuesday: 1:00pm - 2:00pm, Chrissy and Wendy, World Museum Staff Room

Tuesday: 1:00pm - 2:00pm, Claire MRB Staff Area

Throughout the Week: Ben and Anastasia will be available in Juniper Street by arrangement.

Prospect legal webinar: Welfare and wellbeing at work

As part of Union Week, we will also be hosting a webinar with Prospect Legal on Thursday 5 November at 12:00pm. The webinar will focus on your rights relating to welfare and wellbeing in the workplace, including employer responsibilities, support available to staff, and the role trade unions can play in ensuring a healthy and supportive working environment. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and receive practical advice from Prospect's legal team.

Welcome message from the Branch Chair



Over the summer, your branch has been busy representing members and progressing several key pieces of work. We have met regularly with National Museums Liverpool to discuss the implementation of workplace policies, engaged in negotiations on pay and conditions, and continued to raise issues that matter most to members. Following a motion passed at this year's AGM, we have also now launched our Workloads and Wellbeing Survey, giving both members and non-members the opportunity to share their experiences and help shape our priorities for the future.

Through this newsletter and regular updates throughout the year, we will keep you informed about negotiations, campaigns, workplace developments and opportunities to get involved. We are committed to ensuring that members remain at the heart of everything we do. Together, we can build on the progress made so far and continue to make the case for positive change across NML.

Prospect union week 2nd – 9th November

Prospect members and reps across the UK will be taking part in Union Week, Prospect's annual recruitment and organising campaign. The week is all about raising the profile of our union, speaking to colleagues about the benefits of membership, and strengthening our collective voice in the workplace. Every new member makes Prospect stronger. The more members we have, the more effectively we can negotiate with employers, campaign on the issues that matter to us, and ensure that workers have a strong and independent voice at work.

Being part of a trade union isn't just about having support when things go wrong. It's about improving workplaces, securing better pay, protecting terms and conditions, influencing workplace policies, and helping colleagues build better careers. Prospect represents over 157,000 professionals, specialists, managers and technical experts across a wide range of industries and public services.

Union Week provides an opportunity for all of us to talk to colleagues about the value of union membership. Share personal experiences of how Prospect has supported us. Encourage non-members to join. Raise awareness of the work carried out by our local branch and reps.

Prospect Sexual Harassment Support Service

No one should feel isolated when dealing with harassment. Prospect's Sexual Harassment Support Service is a confidential service designed to support members who have experienced, witnessed, or have concerns about sexual harassment in the workplace.

The service is staffed by specially trained Prospect employees who can provide a listening ear, help you understand your options, and offer guidance on the support available. Whether you are looking for information, considering raising a concern, or simply want to discuss a situation in confidence, the service can help you navigate the next steps at a pace that feels right for you.

You do not have to make a formal complaint to access support, and speaking to the service does not commit you to taking any course of action. The focus is on ensuring that members have access to confidential advice, practical support, and a safe space to discuss their experiences.

If you have concerns, would like advice, or simply want to discuss your options, please get in touch. Prospect is here to support you every step of the way.

Email: SHSS@prospect.org.uk or membership@prospect.org.uk
Phone: 020 7902 6647 (SHSS) or 0300 600 1878 (Member Contact Centre)

Stronger Protections Against Sexual Harassment at Work

Everyone has the right to work in an environment that is safe, respectful and free from harassment. The law in this area has been strengthened significantly in recent years, placing greater responsibilities on employers to prevent sexual harassment before it happens, rather than simply responding once an incident has occurred.

Since 2024, employers have had a legal duty to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. However, from 30 October 2026, this duty has been strengthened further. Employers are now required to take "all reasonable steps" to prevent sexual harassment, meaning they must be able to demonstrate that they have taken every reasonable measure available to protect staff. This includes reviewing policies, carrying out risk assessments, providing training, maintaining effective reporting procedures, and taking proactive action where risks are identified.

Importantly, the law has also been extended to cover third-party harassment. This means employers may be liable if workers are harassed by customers, visitors, contractors, service users, volunteers, or members of the public, unless they can show they took all reasonable steps to prevent it. These protections are not limited to sexual harassment and apply more broadly to harassment related to protected characteristics under equality legislation.

For organisations such as National Museums Liverpool, this means employers should be considering where risks may arise, ensuring staff know how to report concerns, making it clear that harassment will not be tolerated, and taking swift action when issues are raised. Creating a safe and inclusive workplace is not simply good practice; it is now a stronger legal obligation.

If you experience or witness sexual harassment at work, support is available. Prospect operates a dedicated and confidential Sexual Harassment Support Service for members.

Prospect guides and resources.

Prospect members' guides are an online resource that can be consulted at any time by logging into your Prospect account and clicking on the 'Knowledge Hub' tab. These guides offer professionally researched and verified content covering a range of topics and can be a helpful first port of call if you have concerns about an issue affecting you or others in the workplace.

Your Prospect account also contains details about your branch and your membership benefits. You can log in and explore these using the links below:

Prospect account login

https://my.prospect.org.uk/login?id=a872340837663dacd1a1a9cc5bde6b81

Members' guides

https://union.prospect.org.uk/resource-library-search.html?document_type=members-guide&sortBy=recent&page=2

PROSPECT PLUS OFFERS

We'll support you when you have a problem at work, as well as secure good pay deals and terms and conditions across the board, but that's not all we're about. Being a Prospect member also gives you access to a whole host of other benefits.

Such as:

- A free wills service
- Holiday packages
- Family days out
- Cheaper cinema tickets
- Airport Extras
- Discounts on gym membership
- Discounts on Apple products

Subject to T's and C's Members should access Member benefits to find out more.

Workloads and Wellbeing Survey Launched

At the AGM, members passed a motion committing the branch to undertake a survey on workloads, staffing pressures and staff wellbeing across National Museums Liverpool. We are pleased to announce that the survey is now live and will run from 2 November until 3 December 2026.

The survey is open to both members and non-members, as we are keen to hear from everyone working across NML. Whether you are experiencing workload pressures, concerns about staffing levels, issues affecting your wellbeing, or have positive experiences to share, your feedback will help us build a clearer picture of working life across the organisation.

The AGM recognised that while concerns about workload and wellbeing are regularly raised with union representatives, there is currently no organisation-wide evidence base showing the scale and impact of these issues. This survey will help us gather that evidence. Once the survey closes, the branch will analyse the results and produce a report highlighting the key themes and concerns raised by staff. The findings will then inform discussions with management and help shape future bargaining, campaigning and organising priorities.

Most importantly, this is your opportunity to confidentially share your experiences and help identify where improvements are needed. The more responses we receive, the stronger the evidence will be when we seek positive change on behalf of staff.

Scan the QR code to complete the survey:

Reps Spotlight: Ben Jones – Equality Rep

What made you decide to become a Prospect representative?

Many of the people I respected and who helped to train me when I joined the organisation were union members or representatives who also helped to soften my relationship towards traditionally leftist politics. I rejoined NML in 2023 after some time away, and decided after some encouragement from existing Reps that it was time to try and pay forward some of that to other, younger members.

What has been the most rewarding part of being a union rep?

I think for me it has been the feeling of making many small, direct improvements or moments of support to members, whether that is helping them get through a difficult formal meeting or simply answering a question about a policy discrepancy they think might be affecting them. Being able to help people and make them feel a little more confident to push back where they need to is a very rich source of self-worth, if self-worth can come from outside. My job is stores-based and often isolates me from what's happening across the organisation, so making even tiny differences when I can means a lot.

What issue facing staff do you think the union can make the biggest difference on?

I think in the heritage sector there is often a feeling of general malaise when it comes to pay and the nature of contracts – these tend to be unstable, and poorly remunerated, leading to people feeling psychologically isolated and like their work is just worth less than people outside the sector who may be better paid – something I am not always sure employers are quick to dispel when it is a useful canard. The union is a great inoculation against that by connecting people and providing the resources to push back against that miasma of despair, as well as improving material conditions, even if this can be a slow process.

What's the biggest misconception people have about unions?

That unions are incredibly powerful, or conversely toothless; have deep pockets; are ineffectual, and fight over infinitesimally small gains at the cost of the bigger picture; or are so nebulous and faddily populist in their policies they ignore the qualitative and the specialist– all contradictory statements I have seen or heard in various forms from people. There's still a whiff of '80s propaganda in the air about unions that is hard to shake, and it's only through people involving themselves in collective action for no immediate direct reward that they will begin to understand what a union truly is for.

How has becoming a rep helped you develop personally or professionally?

Once I had managed to mostly subdue the anxiety that I was not really able to offer anything to members (and move past the impostor syndrome of feeling somebody else would be better suited – there isn't anybody else, or you wouldn't have volunteered because they WOULD have) I realised that I was able to move past those issues in other aspects of my professional life too.

What would you say to a colleague who is thinking about getting more involved in the union?

Two words: DO IT.

If you could persuade every member to do one thing this year, what would it be?

I would ask them to do something we struggle with in the heritage sector: to see your job as a job (albeit one you may enjoy in and identify with strongly) and not tie your sense of self to how much you are paid or how much of a priority you are made to feel by the structure you sit within. Conversely, I'm not going to say that you should accept low pay in this sector via some Mandate of Heaven style idea of pre-ordained societal worth; just remember that the bolts that hold the engines on to the passenger plane are very small and not very expensive, but bad things happen when they are removed and it's not your fault you have been put in that position. Don't let the power to improve things that come from having that responsibility slip past you.

NML Branch Committee 2026/2027



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