



NEU SUFFOLK BRANCH

Joint Secretaries: Luke Halpin & Wendy James
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Branch Secretaries' Report for 2024/25

20th March 2025

Joint Branch Secretaries

Luke Halpin and Kim Robinson were appointed as Joint Branch Secretaries at the AGM in March 2024. Luke stepped into the post in April 2024. Kim started the role in September 2024. Unfortunately, Kim decided to step down at the end of October, so Darren Smith, Senior Regional Officer, advised the Branch to co-opt a temporary Joint Branch Secretary; he nominated Wendy James and this nomination was agreed at a Branch Meeting on 24th October 2024. Wendy took up the role on 4th November 2024. Wendy is a retired primary headteacher, who is now working as a consultant and supply teacher.

Both Luke and Wendy will be standing for re-election at the Branch AGM on 20th March 2025.

Branch Plan (see attached)

We have been working with Darren Smith to develop a Branch Plan. The plan is based on the NEU's *The Ideal Branch Ten Commandments*. Many actions on the plan have been started and/or completed. The plan will form the basis of our Branch work going forward. Time is a factor for all of us, as casework takes priority.

Facilities Time

NEU: NEU Branch Officers are entitled to paid time off for trade union duties. Both local authority-maintained and academy schools should buy-in to local authority facilities pots to fund the paid-release for branch officers to fulfil their duties.

Suffolk CC and 26 of the MATs in Suffolk Branch pay into Facilities Time. 15 MATs (49 schools) do not contribute. All education union representatives are trying to encourage all MATs to pay in and this continues to be a work in progress. Suffolk Branch has a good buy-in compared to many other Branches across the country. Currently, schools who release officers are paid £200 per day for the release. Caseworkers not affiliated with a school are paid £170 per day, this will rise to £200 per day from 1st April 2025.

Facilities Time Hours by Caseworker March 2024 to January 2025													
Caseworker	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Total
Luke Halpin*													78
Kim Robinson*													16
Wendy James						0	0	0	12.5	8.5	11		32
Arriette Brown**						0	0	0	0	0	1		1
Roger Stares	3	1	2.5	3	2	0	1.5	2.5	2	1.5	2		21
Susan Groome	10	6	10	10	9	0	1.5	0	2	0	0		48.5
Neil Hanger	10	9.5	9	11.5	6.5	0	7.5	9	8.5	6	8		85.5
Total	23	16.5	21.5	24.5	17.5	0	10.5	11.5	25	16	22	0	282
*LH & KR's Facilities Time is paid directly to their employer. KR was in post from Sept to Oct 2025. LH is released for 2 days per week. The rest of the caseworkers claim Facilities Time through a "seasonal contract" with Suffolk CC – the Council manage the financial arrangements of the money that is paid in by schools. **AB has undertaken training and is now working on her first case.													

Casework

We now have a record of casework since the beginning of September 2024. Casework can range from answering a simple enquiry through to extensive work to support a member with a complex issue. It is impossible to put a time allocation against each case without onerous record keeping by caseworkers, but suffice to say, Facilities Time is being well used.

Casework Log 1/9/24 to 10/2/25	
Nature of case	Number of cases
Bullying/Harassment	0
Capability	6
Collective Action	1
Complaint	1
Contractual	5
Disciplinary	11
Equalities/Disability	4
General Advice	18
Grievance	1
Maternity / Paternity	0
Pay	6
Redundancy	6
Sickness Absence/Ill-health	10
TUPE	0
TOTAL	69

Recent Actions

- A FAQ sheet has been produced and sent to all school reps.
- Pay-up Campaign meeting to encourage participation in indicative ballot.
- Training planned – Executive led training on *Health and Safety in the Workplace* and *Social Media Awareness* training with Norfolk Branch.