SO WHAT IS A TRADE UNION?

A Trade Union is an organisation of workers whose aim is to improve the working conditions of those workers and to protect individuals who may face difficulties during their employment.

As a RECOGNISED Trade Union, our union negotiates all terms and conditions of employment for most BT employees. The overwhelming majority of BT employees are union members which gives us a very powerful voice.

Whenever major changes are negotiated, all union members get a say in the outcome – we hold a secret ballot to decide.

**Examples of issues negotiated by the union in BT include:**

- Salaries
- Holidays
- Job content
- Shift arrangements
- Staffing numbers
- Time off for maternity/parental leave; other caring responsibilities and urgent domestic situations.

Every member is also able to ask for a trained union Rep to assist them with any issue – perhaps a sick absence meeting; attendance review; disciplinary meeting or grievance hearing.

**Some may ask what is the difference with the Employee Forum in EE?**

Simply, the Employee Forum does not have the same purpose as a trade union, it is there for the employer to consult on workplace issues, but it does not negotiate on behalf of employees.

In EE, who decides what shift pattern you work? Who decides what pay rise you get, or even what you get paid?

We believe you would be better off if EE negotiated with the union and you got a say on the outcome in exactly the same way as other BT employees.

**If you agree, help make it happen!**

Please convince your work colleagues to meet the local reps and to join the union. There is a very old saying “unity is strength”. What it means is the more members we have, the greater our ability to negotiate with the employer. It applies to EE, it applies to you.